THE

HISTORY

OF THE

HOLY BIBLE.

AS CONTAINED

In the Old and New Teſtament.

ATTEMPTED IN

EASY VERSE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

Containing the SACRED HISTORY, from the Giving of the Law to the Anointing of Saul.

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THE

THE

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BOOK IV.

FROM THE

Setting up the Tabernacle, to the Death of Joſhua:

CONTAINING

The Tranſactions of about 56 Years.

BRITISH MUSEUM

HISTORY THE FIRST.

Moſes obtains Forgiveneſs for the Iſraelites great Sin, in Worſhipping the Golden Calf: Receives New Tables of the Law; and compleats the Work of the Tabernacle.

Exodus, ch. xxxiv. *to the End.*

STILL at great Sinai's ſacred ſide
The Iſraelitiſh tents abide;
And thro' the humbled tribes appear
Confuſion, ſorrow, guilt and fear.
Moſes beholds their ſtate with grief;
And to obtain them ſure relief
Aſcends the holy mountain's crown.
To him the eternal GOD comes down!
Late had the chief addreſs'd his prayer
To ſee his GOD in glory there:
Nor ſtood in his requeſt deny'd,
So far as nature could abide.

And likewiſe had receiv'd command
To bring new tables in his hand,
Like thoſe he broke, when firſt his eyes
Beheld the impious idol riſe.
According to his gracious word,
Then paſs'd the glory of the LORD:
A boundleſs blaze of dazzling light!
No mortal eye could bear the ſight:
While angels from on high proclaim
Aloud the honours of his name.
The GOD of all, now from his throne,
Makes his immortal mercy known;
In condeſcending goodneſs ſhines,
And pardons all his people's ſins:
Yet will his juſtice make appear,
And not the impious guilty clear.
The prophet when he heard and ſaw,
Bow'd to the ground with reverend awe.
And to his ſervant now the LORD
Deign'd to confirm his former word;

And let his gracious promiſe ſtand,
To Iſrael made, of Canaan's land:
But gave ſtrict charge it be their care,
When his ſtrong arm ſhall bring them there,
To view their idol gods with ſcorn,
And all their worſhip overturn.
And leſt the alluring heathen fair
Should by their wiles their heart inſnare;
And they, with fond deſire to pleaſe,
Bow to their gods, and learn their ways;
The God of Iſrael gave command,
His people ſhould reſolved ſtand
With them in marriage not to join,
Or with ſuch mixture ſtain their line.
Then, with his hand, Jehovah draws
On the hard ſtone his righteous laws;
The laws he had from Sinai ſpoke,
Which lately had been doubly broke:
But now engrav'd afreſh appear;
And God the marble gave the ſeer.

The

The prophet then his way purſues,
To give the tribes the welcome news:
But to the chief it was not known
That all his face with glory ſhone:*
Bright as the ſhining ſource of day,
He down the mountain takes his way;
The affrighted tribes, in wild amaze,
Retreated from the beamy blaze,
But, call'd by Moſes, they return:
And while the will of GOD they learn
He veils his face; for mortal ſight
Shrinks from the rays of heavenly light.

Then, while the tribes attentive ſtand,
The holy prophet gives command,
(As GOD to make his holy things
Depends on what the nation brings)
That all the men whoſe generous mind
To make an offering ſtood inclin'd,

Should

* How long this brightneſs continued on Moſes' face, is not certainly known. Some commentators ſuppoſe that it remained all his life.

Should jointly bring, with free conſent,
What might compoſe his holy tent,
And each utenſil form, which there
In conſtant worſhip muſt appear.
Theſe GOD commanded to be made;
Moſes the model had ſurvey'd.

The nation heard, nor long delays,
But bring, with holy love and praiſe,
Silver and gold, fine wood and ſkins:
The offering at the great begins,
And runs through all. The willing fair
Their ear-rings and their jewels ſpare;
Fine linen ſpin, and jointly ſtrive
Who largeſt, and who firſt ſhall give.

The appointed workmen * GOD had taught,
In the great charge ſucceſsful wrought:
The tent, and each utenſil made,
In order as the LORD had ſaid,

When

* Bezaleel, the ſon of Uri, of the tribe of Judah; and Aholiab, the ſon of Ahiſamach, of the tribe of Dan.

When on the mount he gave the law,
And the great pattern Moſes ſaw.
Now had the circling year gone round,
Since Pharaoh's mighty hoſt was drown'd,
And Iſrael's tribes had freedom gain'd;
When, in the rude rough deſert land,
Moſes the tabernacle rear'd,
And all the holy things appear'd
In order, as the King of Heaven
Had the exact deſcription given.
From his high throne JEHOVAH bends,
Soon to the holy place deſcends;
And there in glory ſhines ſo bright,
Not Moſes could endure the ſight.
Cover'd with fleecy clouds, the GOD
High o'er the ſacred tent abode;
Clouds which by day to heaven aſpire,
By night a pyramid of fire.
And while the wonderous cloud remain'd,
The tribes around in order ſtand;

But when it mov'd, without delay
They follow where it leads the way.
By conſecration to prepare
The prieſts, was firſt the prophet's care.
Aaron in ſumptuous robes was dreſt,
And ſtood appointed GOD's high-prieſt:
While common prieſts were all his ſons;
And in his line the prieſthood runs.
The tribe of Levi by the LORD
(Moſes receiv'd the ſovereign word)
Was to the ſanctuary join'd;
To every ſervile taſk aſſign'd.
Seven days the ſacred rites * require,
And theſe the holy prieſts retire: †
The eighth, the deſtin'd victims bleed;
And they to ſacrifice proceed.
A bullock, and an horned ram,
On GOD's appointed altar flame;

* Of conſecration.

† Within the tabernacle.

Fire from the ſkies deſcending plays,
And makes the holy victims blaze;
The nation ſhouts aloud, and all,
Adoring, on their faces fall.

HISTORY THE SECOND.

The Death of Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's Sons.

Lev. ch. x.

BUT two young prieſts, without command,
Preſum'd before the LORD to ſtand,
Each with his cenſer in his hand;
And clouds of incenſe thence aſpire,
Not lighted with the holy fire.*
Swift from the LORD directly came
On the young men a ſheet of flame,

And

* The holy fire was that which was miraculouſly kindled on the altar, by fire from heaven, which was conſtantly kept burning, and appointed to light the incenſe.

And both the youths it breathleſs lays,
Wrapp'd in one vaſt ſurrounding blaze.
In ſilent grief the father ſtands,
While Moſes awfully commands
The prieſts from mourning to refrain,
Leſt wrath ariſe, and all be ſlain:
For heaven's ſupreme eternal LORD
Will not be careleſſly ador'd.
Then two young Levites took their way,
Where pale in death the brothers lay.
Moſes to theſe the order gave,
To give the hapleſs youths a grave:
And floods of tears the nation ſhed,
While from the camp they bear the dead.*

* It is ſuppoſed that theſe unhappy young men had ſuffered themſelves to be overtaken with wine when they went into the tabernacle; becauſe the uſe of it is directly forbidden to the prieſts at that time: Lev. x. 9. And this fatal event is ſuppoſed to have happened the firſt day after their conſecration.

HISTORY THE THIRD.

The profane Curſer and Blaſphemer put to Death.

Lev. ch. xxiv.

WHILE Iſrael's tents at Sinai ſtand,
Wide ſpread acroſs the deſert land,
A youth from Egypt's lineage ſprung,
Gave horrid licence to his tongue.
He ſtrove with one of Iſrael's ſons,
And thro' his heart foul rancour runs:
To keen reproach he went at firſt,
Then bitterly he ſwore and curſt;
Oft took the name of GOD in vain,
Nor could from blaſphemy refrain.
The people ſhudder at the deed,
And to avenge it ſoon proceed:
But that JEHOVAH's will be known,
The wretch is firſt in priſon thrown.

They

They aſk advice, and God replies,
The bold blaſphemer ſurely dies:
Let him without the camp be led,
And then upon his impious head
The witneſſes their hands ſhall place,
And truly repreſent the caſe.
Let the aſſembled nation ſtand,
With each a ſtone; and from his hand
Diſcharge it at the rebel's head,
And cover with a heap the dead.

HISTORY THE FOURTH.

The Removal of the Camp to the Wilderneſs of Paran. The People Murmur for want of Fleſh; and are ſupplied with Quails. Aaron and Miriam Reproach Moſes on Account of his Wife.

Numbers, ch. x. xi. xii.

TWELVE months beſide the mount of GOD
The tribes of Iſrael abode;
And from the mercy-ſeat the LORD
To Moſes gave his heavenly word.
GOD, as their King, his nation guides,
He in the midſt of them abides;
And over their affairs preſides.
The cloudy pillar then remov'd;
And all the tribes by heaven belov'd.
Follow'd in order as they lay;
And three days journeying, took their way
To Paran's dry and deſert land;
And many days they there remain'd.

Here,

Here, weary of the bread of heaven,
In wide profuſion freely given,
They raiſe their murmurs to the ſkies,
And their appointed food deſpiſe.
Turning their thoughts to Goſhen's fare,
They long for fleſh in ſad deſpair.
Thus while each heart to Egypt turns,
JEHOVAH's wrath againſt them burns;
He ſmites the nation in his ire,
And the moſt guilty die by fire.
Moſes in grief to GOD complains
What heavy burdens he ſuſtains;
How hard to rule the ſtubborn race,
Or to attend to every caſe;
How hard to gain them freſh ſupplies,
Or quell their murmurs as they riſe.
In anſwer to his prayer, the GOD
Deigns to relieve him from the load:
And ſeventy elders with him join'd,
All fitted for the taſk aſſign'd.

Then to the people thus the LORD,
By Moſes' mouth, directs his word,
That ſince his manna they deſpiſe,
Fleſh he will give them from the ſkies:
The nation he will make his gueſt,
And for a month prolong the feaſt.—
Where can be found, cry'd Moſes then,
Fleſh for ſix hundred thouſand men!—
The LORD replies, If doubt remain,
The myſtery let the event explain.—
The prophet, while the people mourn'd,
The anſwer of the LORD return'd.

Then from the ſea a wind prevails,
And like a cloud deſcend the quails,
Wide hovering o'er the camp around,
And inſtant cover all the ground.
The wondering nation take and eat,
And a whole month the feaſt repeat;
But heaven's rich goodneſs ne'er proclaim,
Nor praiſe the bounteous Giver's name.

This

This rous'd the vengeance of the ſky;
And by the plague great numbers die.
To this great diſcontent ſucceeds,
And fierce contention quickly breeds
Between the ſiſter and the wife
Of Iſrael's leader. In the ſtrife
Aaron appears; and this the caſe:
The maid was not of Iſrael's race,
But born at Midian. Moſes came
From Egypt, and eſpous'd the dame:
When he from Pharaoh's preſence fled,
He took the virgin to his bed.
His kindred dwelt in Egypt's land,
And to his ſpouſe unknown remain'd;
And when JEHOVAH him decreed
The leader of his choſen ſeed,
She was at Midian left behind,
But lately had her huſband join'd.*

* It is the opinion of ſome commentators, that the relation of Jethro's bringing Moſes' wife and children to the

Hence foul reproach on Moſes roſe,
And high the cauſeleſs clamour goes;
But GOD his glory ſoon withdraws,
And vindicates his ſervant's cauſe:
Miriam * is leprous ſtruck by Heaven,
And ſeven days from the camp is driven;
But Moſes for the dame implor'd,
And ſhe to health was ſoon reſtor'd.

the camp, as recorded Exodus xviii. ſhould come in this place; and that the contention happened immediately thereupon.

* The ſiſter of Moſes.

HISTORY THE FIFTH.

Moſes ſends Twelve Men to ſpy out the Land of Canaan: The diſcouraging Account they bring; and its Conſequences.

Numbers, ch. xiii. xiv.

NOW Iſrael's tents at Kadeſh ſtand,
Cloſe bordering on the promis'd land,
When order'd by the LORD of Hoſt,
Twelve men were ſent to view the coaſt;
To compaſs all the plains around,
And ſee the product of the ground;
To mark the cities as they riſe,
And where their ſtrength or weakneſs lies;
To trace the nations round, and ſee
Of what account their warriors be;
Whate'er concerns their ſtate to learn,
And then to Iſrael's camp return.

The men ſet out without delay,
Joſhua and Caleb led the way;
While fruits of every kind abound,
And heavy harveſts nod around.
They took their rout full on the ſun,
And the whole length of Canaan run;
Survey'd the cities and the fields,
And noted what each country yields.
But when the ſpies to Hebron came,
Great Hebron! known to ancient fame,
Built by the giant Arba,* where
The ſons of Anak dwelt; 'twas there
Their hearts firſt fail'd them: With ſurpriſe
They ſee the enormous giants riſe
In huge terrific form and might;
They ſee, and tremble at the ſight.
Then ſad and ſilent take their way
Where the ſmooth brook of Eſhcol lay;

Here

* Joſhua, xiv. 15.

Here generous vines o'erſpread the ground,
And purple grapes hang bluſhing round,
Bold Joſhua and ſtout Caleb join,
A branch they cut from off the vine,
And on their ſhoulders bear the prize,
Which on a ſtaff between them lies.
Then join the camp, their journey done,
When ſinks the fortieth ſetting ſun.

The attentive tribes around them preſs,
To hear what proſpect of ſucceſs:
The land is good, they all reply,
And yields its natives rich ſupply:
Vaſt is the vintage, as you ſee,
For theſe the grapes of Canaan be;
Each plain delightful paſture yields,
And yellow harveſts crown the fields;
White ſheep upon the mountains ſhine,
While in the vallies low the kine:
But the inhabitants are ſtrong,
And warlike ſeem, both old and young;

Crowded

Crowded and vaſt their cities ſtand,
And armies wait each king's command;
High are their walls, and ſtrong their towers,
Nor can we hope they will be ours.
Beſides (if truth we muſt declare)
We ſaw the ſons of Anak there;
Men of ſuch vaſt enormous ſize,
We ſeem'd but inſects in their eyes.
Nor can we hope by mortal might
E'er to ſubdue their race in fight.—
Through all the hoſt hoarſe murmurs riſe,
And the whole nation thus replies:
Oh that the LORD had ſeiz'd our breath
When Egypt's ſons lay cold in death!
Or had refus'd our late ſupply,
And in the deſert let us die.
For Canaan we ſhall never gain,
But in the wilderneſs be ſlain.
To war their kings will ſoon proceed,
When by the ſword we all ſhall bleed;

While

While all our wives and children they
Will make with eaſe their captive prey.
O Egypt, rich are thy ſupplies,
Which from thy Nile each ſeaſon riſe!
Then let us here no longer mourn,
But make a captain and return.—
Chear up your hearts, brave Caleb cry'd,
And let theſe nations be defy'd;
Remember what our GOD hath wrought,
And how he late with Egypt fought:
If we obey, our hoſt will ſtand,
We ſurely ſhall poſſeſs the land,
And all this impious race accurſt!
We'll tread beneath us as the duſt.—
In this brave Joſhua with him join'd;
But raging like the ſtormy wind,
The roaring tribes impetuous cry,
And doom the noble youths to die.
When this outrageous cry was heard,
The glory of the LORD appear'd:

The riſing ſtorm the brothers * found,
And both fell proſtrate on the ground.
An awful voice immediate broke,
And thus the GOD to Moſes ſpoke:
How long ſhall man my power deſpiſe,
And wretches thus provoke the ſkies!
Oft have they ſeen diſplay'd to view
My glories, and my terrors too:
And can they doubt! Let vengeance fly,
And by one ſtroke the nation die:
Thou ſhalt my conſtant favourite be,
And greater nations come from thee.—
The prophet pleads, O LORD forgive!
Let the rebellious nation live!
As late thou haſt proclaim'd thy name,
Now let thy mercy be the ſame.
Why ſhould inſulting Egypt cry,
That all the tribes of Iſrael die,

And

* Moſes and Aaron.

And in the desert find a grave,
Because JEHOVAH could not save?—
Once more I will, replies the LORD,
Pardon the nation at thy word:
But mark me well! for as I live,
No land of Canaan will I give
To these bold murmurers; but they all
Shall in the thorny desert fall:
There shall they wander forty years,
Till of the train not one appears.
Now let the nation turn their face,
And back the dusty desert trace:
But their young children, which they say
Will to their foes be made a prey,
Shall by my power to combat rise,
And rule the land which they despise.
Brave Joshua, and bold Caleb too,
Shall live my power and truth to view:
In them both truth and goodness lie;
But every vile ungrateful spy

My wrath ſhall feel.—Swift vengeance then
Smites the reluctant murmuring ten,
And inſtant death is ſeen to give;
But Caleb and brave Joſhua live.
Moſes reports the awful word:
The people mourn before the LORD;
Would fain reverſe the great decree,
And the fair land of Canaan ſee.
They, tho' forbid, reſolve to go,
And combat with the mighty foe.
Soon as the morn aſſum'd her throne,
They brace their ſhining armour on,
And march courageous up the hill,
Contrary to JEHOVAH's will:
But from the mountain's ſtately height
Deſcends the warlike Canaanite,
With Amalek's revengeful ſons,
When Iſrael's hoſt before them runs:
Heavy and hard the war deſcends,
And like a mighty torrent rends;

The foe with ſhouts their terror views,
And far as Hormah's plains purſues.
Thus Iſrael, by their unbelief,
Fill'd their own hearts with pungent grief.
No Canaan now before them lies,
But they muſt backward turn their eyes;
And with encreaſing care and pain
Trace the vaſt deſert o'er again.
Twelve months at Kadeſh they abode,
Then by the great command of GOD
They wandered eight and thirty years,
With heavy hearts, and frequent tears;
Till, tracing wilds and foreſts o'er,
Their tents at Kadeſh ſtand once more.

HISTORY THE SIXTH.

The Sabbath-breaker Stoned.

Numbers, ch. xv.

WHILE Iſrael in the deſert lay,
One of their race prophan'd the day
Appointed for their holy reſt;
Without reluctance he tranſgreſs'd
The great command from Sinai ſpoke,
And GOD's appointed ſabbath broke.
For rotten ſticks he ſearch'd around,
And the ſmall bruſh together bound;
Then through the winding way he went,
To bear the burden to his tent.
Iſrael with grief the deed ſurveys,
And ſoon the bold offender ſeize:
Then till the will of GOD be known,
In priſon he's directly thrown.
To Moſes then JEHOVAH ſpoke,
The man that hath my ſabbath broke,

And

And dar'd the bold preſumptuous deed,
For the offence ſhall ſurely bleed.
Let the aſſembled nation all
With one conſent upon him fall,
And, none lamenting at his death,
With heavy ſtones beat out his breath.—
The liſtening tribes to vengeance riſe,
And low in death the offender lies.

HISTORY THE SEVENTH.

The Rebellion of Korah.

Numbers, ch. xvi.

BUT tho' the aſſembled nation ſaw
JEHOVAH thus enforce his law;
Tho' every national affair
Was ſettled by his love and care,
Some of the chief of Iſrael's race
To groundleſs diſcontent gave place.

Their

Their hearts with pride and rancour ſwell,
And ſeek occaſion to rebel.

As Dathan and Abiram ſhine
Among the chiefs of Reuben's line,
The government their thoughts purſue,
As to the eldeſt brother due.
Korah, a chief of Levi's race,
To Aaron's ſons will not give place:
The prieſthood he would make his prize;
And hence their mutual murmurs riſe.
By cloſe and cautious whiſpers led,
At firſt the latent poiſon ſpread;
But ſoon more bold and open grows,
And numbers publickly oppoſe.
E'en five times fifty nobles join
Their brethren in the baſe deſign:
Bold Korah heads the murmuring train,
And thus aloud they all complain:
Ye ſons of Amram! all muſt ſee
How covetous and proud ye be;

With

With greedy eyes ye have in view
The government and prieſthood too;
And boldly ſeize them both: But why
Should you exalt yourſelves ſo high!
Are not we all GOD's choſen race,
The objects of peculiar grace?
To all he hath his love expreſt,
Nor one more holy than the reſt.—
When Moſes heard, to earth he falls,
And on his GOD for ſuccour calls.
Then to the murmuring train reply'd:
Ye ſons of Levi! dare your pride
Againſt the GOD of Iſrael riſe,
And his appointed prieſt deſpiſe!
Hath not the LORD your tribe ordain'd
The neareſt to himſelf to ſtand!
Yet not content, with greedy view
You fain would ſeize the prieſthood too!
But check a while your daring pride!
JEHOVAH will the ſtrife decide.

To-morrow

To-morrow let your murmuring band
Take each a cenſer in his hand,
And incenſe burn before the LORD;
He will maintain his holy word,
Enforce his great commanding voice,
And let the nation know his choice.—
Then the great prophet, having heard
That Dathan in this cauſe appear'd,
With bold Abiram, to them ſent,
To come and tell him what they meant;
But they the meſſenger deſpiſe,
And each bold rebel thus replies:
Let daſtard ſouls, if they think fit,
To this great prince of ours ſubmit;
In us he no ſuch ſlaves ſhall find,
How can he think we are ſo blind?
Hath he not brought us from a land
Where every good we might command?
In the lone deſert now we lie,
And are appointed there to die:

With

With promiſes we have been fed,
And, lur'd by theſe, to ruin led.
Where is the land ſo oft declar'd
Of all theſe toils the full reward!
Will he one ſtep that way allow!
Where are the fields and vineyards now!
And muſt we ſtill be blind and dumb!
Tell him from us, we will not come!—
This unkind meſſage fills with grief
The ſacred ſeer, and for relief
He ſeeks his God. Now morning roſe,
When all the clan of Korah goes,
And with the worthy brothers ſtand,
With each a cenſer in his hand;
They view them with reproachful eyes,
While clouds of incenſe from them riſe.
The hoſt beholds them with amaze:
A mutiny they ſtrive to raiſe.
And now in glory God appear'd,
And thus his awful voice was heard:

Haſte! haſte! my ſervants, far away,
Nor with the impious nation ſtay;
That ſudden wrath may on them fly,
And in a moment all deſtroy.—
The prophet pleads: O LORD, and ſhall
For one man's ſin a nation fall!—
With quick reply then ſpake the LORD:
Let all the tribes regard my word,
Bold Korah's tent at diſtance view,
And Dathan's, and Abiram's too;
But draw not near.—Moſes declares
The awful orders which he hears,
And all the congregation fears;
At diſtance ſtand from either tent,
And ſilent wait the great event.
Now full in all their view appear
The bold preſumers, void of fear,
With all their wives and children round.
Moſes advances on the ground,

GOD's

God's great deſign he ſoon expreſs'd,
And thus the liſtening tribes addreſs'd:
Ye ſons of Iſrael, would ye ſee
A proof that God hath ſpoke by me,
And all your regulations ſtand
Appointed by his great command;
Behold theſe men! and if they fall
To death's cold regions like us all;
And if no ſtrange event take place,
Uncommon to the human race;
Then with impoſture blaſt my name,
And let me bear eternal ſhame.
But if the Lord ariſe in wrath,
And underneath them cleave the earth;
And all the daring rebels go
Swift headlong to the pit below;
Then will you ſee, if ye be wiſe,
How much ye have provok'd the ſkies.—
He ſaid: The tents all tremble round,
And a vaſt earthquake rocks the ground;

Beneath in fury drives the God,
The desert quakes, the mountains nod:
Soon breaks the earth beneath each tent,
And down the daring rebels went;
While from their shrieks, and dismal cries,
The whole astonish'd nation flies.
Then from the Lord a whirling flame
Full on the censer-bearers came,
Who stood advancing Korah's claim:
Sudden the five times fifty die;
And while expos'd their bodies lie,
The people view with trembling awe,
And slowly to their tents withdraw.
But when the morn renew'd the day,
The tribes to Moses took their way,
And murmuring cry with one accord,
You've kill'd the people of the Lord.—
While thus the discontented crowd
Against their leaders storm'd aloud,
Descends to earth the fiery cloud;

And as the boundleſs glory falls,
An awful Voice to Moſes calls:
Haſte from the camp, without delay!
Depart! and give my vengeance way.—
On earth each brother ſuppliant lies,
When Moſes thus to Aaron cries:
Haſte, take a cenſer! wrath is fled,
Which ſoon will ſtrike the nation dead
Which every day their God provoke;
Let incenſe ſtay the mighty ſtroke!
Quick from the altar take the fire!
Petition as the fumes aſpire,
And make atonement.—Aaron goes,
And ſoon the dire diſaſter knows:
The holy prieſt exalts his head
Between the living and the dead,
And as the fumes of incenſe riſe
He humbly ſupplicates the ſkies.
His choſen prieſt JEHOVAH hears,
And the rebellious nation ſpares;

But

But e'er the ſweeping vengeance ſtay'd,
In duſt were fourteen thouſand laid.
And now to make contention ceaſe,
To ſettle all the tribes in peace,
And fix the prieſthood, Iſrael's God
Commands each tribe to bring a rod
Of dead dry twigs; and on the ſame
Let every prince inſcribe his name:
On Levi's rod let Aaron write;
And lay them by the ark all night.
The tribes obey; twelve rods are brought,
And each inſcrib'd as God had taught:
All in the tabernacle lay,
And when the morn return'd the day
By Moſes the twelve rods were ſhewn,
And every ruler chooſe his own:
When in the people's wondering view,
Full of green leaves, and bloſſoms too,
With heavy fruit, was Aaron's rod.
The ſhouting nation own the God;

And now with one united voice
Applauding, they confirm the choice;
And ſay they will no more draw nigh
To touch the prieſthood, leſt they die.

HISTORY THE EIGHTH.

The Iſraelites, after Eighteen Encampments, return to Kadeſh-Barnea. Water fails. Moſes is commanded to call on the Rock: But by his Manner of doing this, gives Offence to his GOD; and Aaron and he are denied Entrance into Canaan. Aaron dies on Mount Hor.

Numbers, ch. xx.

NOW in th' account of time appears
A ſpace of ſeven and thirty years
Since Iſrael's tribes from Kadeſh ſtray,
In the dry trackleſs dreary way,

Their

Their folly and their guilt to learn,
And now to Kadeſh they return.
Eighteen encampments they had made;*
Here longer, there leſs time they ſtaid,
As GOD directed by his cloud.
To raiſe them bread no land they plow'd,
By manna all this time ſupply'd;
And guſhing ſtreams from Horeb's ſide
Purſue them thro' the deſert wide.
Whole and unworn their clothes remain'd,
Freſh as when new, till they had gain'd

The

* The Iſraelites returned to Kadeſh in the firſt month of the fortieth year of their coming out of Egypt, after eighteen encampments from the ſame place, which they left at the end of the ſecond year. The encampments are as follow; from Kadeſh 1 to Rithmah, 2 Rimmon-parez, 3 Libnah, 4 Riſſah, 5 Kehelathah, 6 mount Shapher, 7 Haradah, 8 Makheloth, 9 Tahath, 10 Tarah, 11 Mithcah, 12 Haſhmonah, 13 Moſeroth, 14 Bene-jaakan, 15 Hor-hagidgad, 16 Jotbathah, 17 Ebronah, 18 Ezion-gaber; then to Kadeſh.

The land of promiſe: But the ſtream
Which had ſo long from Horeb came,
Tho' wanted ſtill, was now grown dry,
When thus the people murmuring cry:
O that the fire of GOD that ſlew
Our brethren, had devour'd us too:
Or that the earth, with opening womb,
Had hid us from all woes to come;
For here we in the deſert lie,
And muſt for want of water die.
Better in Egypt we'd remain'd,
Than periſh in this evil land.—
The brothers ſupplicate their GOD,
Who bids them take the holy rod,
And on a rock adjacent call,
When ſtreams of water thence ſhall fall.
The rod, purſuant to his word,
Moſes takes from before the LORD;
With it he ſtands before the rock,
In crowds the people round him flock:

Ye rebels! then the prophet cries,
Still will your daring murmurs riſe!
Still make JEHOVAH on you frown,
And bring freſh plagues and curſes down!
Out of this rock muſt we produce
Clear water, for your general uſe!
Near forty tedious years are fled
Since guſhing ſtreams from Horeb ſpread:
Then you to heaven your murmurs ſent,
And you have ſeen the dire event.
Muſt we to Canaan ne'er proceed!
But ſtill to wandering be decreed
By your rebellion!—With his rod
Twice ſmote the prophet; but his GOD
He had forgot. A copious ſtream
Down from the rock directly came.
The people view the chryſtal tide,
And all the nation is ſupply'd.

Then to the brothers ſpoke the LORD:
Since you preſum'd to doubt my word

Before

Before the people, and complain
That Canaan's land they will not gain,
My truth I ſoon will make appear;
But Moſes ſhall not lead them there.—
Now Iſrael's tents near Edom ſtand,
And aſk a paſſage thro' the land;
The king refus'd, and came with force
Of dreadful arms, to ſtop their courſe.
The war they ſhun, nor longer ſtay,
But to mount Hor purſue their way.
On Hor's high ſummit Aaron dies;
And ſtripp'd of all his robes he lies;
The ſacred robes his ſon * receives;
For their lov'd prieſt the nation grieves:
They all unite to ſpeak his praiſe,
And ſpend in mourning thirty days.

* Eleazar.

HISTORY THE NINTH.

The Brazen Serpent.

Numbers, ch. xxi.

NOW bordering on the promis'd land
Again the tents of Iſrael ſtand,
When Arad, one of Canaan's kings,
A mighty hoſt to battle brings;
And making warlike force his boaſt,
He ſmites the ſkirts of Iſrael's hoſt;
Plunders their camp, and takes away
Great numbers as his captive prey.
The humbled nation ſeek the ſkies,
In hopes that Iſrael's GOD will riſe
In her defence; and then prepare
To face this dreadful ſon of war.
JEHOVAH deigns to interpoſe,
And gives them victory o'er their foes:
The men they ſlay, the cities burn,
And back in triumph ſoon return.

As Edom would their march withſtand,
They fetch'd a compaſs round his land:
But here the tribes, with deep diſmay,
Beheld the dangers of the way;
And while unceaſing murmurs riſe,
With ſtormy look they view the ſkies.
JEHOVAH ſoon to vengeance turns,
And in the air immediate burns
A flight of fiery ſerpents. All
About the camp promiſcuous fall:
They bite the guilty nation round,
And certain death inflames the wound.
The humbled tribes lament their deeds;
And Heaven's rich mercy ſoon ſucceeds.
An obeliſk the prophet rears;
Here rais'd to public view appears
A brazen ſerpent: This who views
No longer the diſeaſe purſues;
Immediate eaſe the proſpect gives,
And the beholding nation lives.

Still thro' the duſty deſert lay
God's choſen people's deſtin'd way.
The water fails. With pitying eye
Jehovah ſends a quick ſupply.
The princes now, by his command,
In open view aſſembled ſtand;
And, while the armies crowd around,
Each pierces with his ſtaff the ground;
Then draws it out, before their eyes,
And ſpouting waters bubbling riſe:
The nation ſing beſide the ſtream,
And great Jehovah is their theme.

HISTORY THE TENTH.

The Conqueſt of Sihon, the Amoritiſh King; and Og, the Gigantic King of Baſhan.

Numbers, ch. xxi.—*Deut.* ch. ii. iii.

TWO potent heathen nations lay
Directly in the people's way,
Before the choſen nation gains
Rich Canaan's moſt delightful plains.
Now low in duſt each warrior lies
Who dar'd to murmur at the ſkies,
Deſtin'd for this by GOD's decree
The land of Canaan ne'er to ſee.
Joſhua and Caleb ſtill remain
Two valiant warriors on the plain,
And all the eager tribes prepare,
Exulting, to begin the war:
When thus the LORD to Moſes ſpake:
Let all the tribes their journey take,

Paſs

Paſs over Arnon,* and demand
A ſpeedy paſſage thro' the land
Of Heſhbon's king. Your ſuit deny'd,
Prepare to check the monarch's pride;
Confront him boldly in the field,
Soon ſhall his mighty army yield.
You ſhall inſpire your foes with dread,
And trample on the mighty dead:
Victory ſhall follow where you go,
And lay the kings of Canaan low.—
The prophet to the king apply'd;
The monarch his requeſt deny'd,
And brings his armies to oppoſe;
When Iſrael's hoſt to meet him goes,
Drives like a ſtorm that gathers round,
And treads his warriors to the ground:
O'er all his land deſtruction ſpread,
And pil'd in mighty heaps the dead,

From

* The river Arnon, frequently mentioned in the ſacred writings. It riſes in the mountains of Gilead, and runs into the Dead Sea.

From flowery Arnon's winding ſtream
To diſtant Jabbok. Iſrael came
By great JEHOVAH's juſt command,
And ſeiz'd his cities, and his land.

To Baſhan next God's armies go,
And Og the giant overthrow:
This prince of vaſt enormous ſize,
On iron bedſteads * nightly lies.
He in the war receiv'd a wound,
His armour rings againſt the ground:
Dreadful in death, he ſpreads the plain,
By men of common ſtature ſlain.
By Iſrael's ſword his people fall;
Wide-waſting ſlaughter ſwallows all.
Then all his cities, and his coaſt,
Became the ſpoil of Iſrael's hoſt.

* The bedſteads of iron on which this giant lay, were preſerved for a long time in the city of Rabbah. They were fifteen feet four inches long, and ſix feet ten inches broad.

Full ſixty cities, wall'd around,
And arm'd with towers, the conquerors found.
In dreadful war the natives fell;
And there the ſons of Iſrael dwell.

HISTORY THE ELEVENTH.

The Prophecies of Balaam.

Numbers, ch. xxii. xxiii. xxiv.

NEAR to great Jordan's ſacred ſtream
The conquering tribes of Iſrael came;
And ſtretch'd on Moab's ſpacious plains,
A while in peace their camp remains.
Balak the king beholds with fear
This mighty nation come ſo near,
And while the wondering crowds relate
The giant Og and Sihon's fate,
Thro' Moab's land the rumour runs,
And terror ſeizes all her ſons.

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Engraved for Fellows's Hist. of the Bible.

Balaam bleſsing Iſrael.

To truſt the fortune of the field
The wary monarch will not yield:
To deeper thoughts he turns his mind,
And would in chains of magic bind
The victor hoſt, the while he ſmites:
Midian in this with him unites.

At diſtant Pethor, near the ſtream
Of great Euphrates, high in fame
The prophet Balaam dwelt; and here
Moab's and Midian's chiefs appear,
Explain the terror of their views,
And beg he every art will uſe
To curſe this people, and confound,
That they may ſmite them to the ground.
The honour and rewards they brought,
Engag'd the old diviner's thought;
All thought of God at diſtance lies,
But gain his every care employs;
To curſe or bleſs indifferent lay,
That beſt to him which beſt would pay;

And while the winds of profit blow,
It ſtood his fix'd deſign to go:
But better to preſerve his ſtate,
He bids the princely nobles wait.
As in the night his thoughts he turn'd
(While all his ſoul with rapture burn'd)
On the great honours and reward
By Moab's king for him prepar'd,
And by what deep diſplay of ſkill
He might perform the monarch's will,
His manſion ſhook; he wildly ſtar'd,
And thus an awful voice was heard:
Proceed not in this bold deſign!
Nor curſe a people that are mine;
To them my promiſe ſhall not fail,
Nor can inchanting ſkill prevail;
By them the land will be poſſeſs'd;
I bleſs'd them, and they ſhall be bleſs'd!—
The old magician, in a fright,
Soon as the morn reſtor'd the light,

Left

Lets the aſtoniſh'd nobles know,
That for his life he dare not go.
Silent and ſad, the princely train
Return to Moab's plains again,
Make the old man's refuſal known,
And Moab ſends a general groan.
The king concludes he ſeems ſo nice
Only with views to raiſe his price;
And nobler princes to him ſends,
Who let him know that he intends
To make the journey worth regard,
And crown his toil with vaſt reward.
The necromancer rolls his eyes,
And fain would make the wealth his prize;
He longs to go without delay,
But ſtill he bids the nobles ſtay.
At night the former Voice he hears,
Which bids him go; but yet declares,
That when before the king he ſtands
He that ſhall ſpeak which GOD commands.

Early

Early he riſes, and with ſpeed
All on their journey ſoon proceed.
His thoughts on gain old Balaam plac'd,
And hurries on his aſs with haſte:
His greedy heart all heaven offends,
Thence a bright angel ſoon deſcends,
And ſhining dreadful as a God,
Stands with a ſword full in the road.
The aſs the heavenly form beheld,
And turn'd aſide into the field:
The wizard his deſign purſues,
Nor once the great oppoſer views;
But as the aſs retards his haſte,
He ſturdy ſtrokes upon him plac'd.
Now brighter ſtill the viſion burns,
And full on the diviner turns;
To a cloſe narrow way it came,
And brandiſh'd like a whirling flame
A dreadful ſword: The trembling aſs
Dare not draw nigh, or by it paſs,

But hurls the rider to the ground:
Soon as his legs the old man found,
To the poor brute in wrath he goes,
And loads his hide with heavy blows;
When the dull aſs the ſilence broke,
And to his angry lord thus ſpoke:
What evil have I done, which brings
Such foul abuſe?—Thy hardſhip ſprings
From careleſſneſs, reply'd the ſire,
And juſtly haſt thou rous'd my ire;
To mock me thou haſt ſlack'd thy ſpeed,
And by my ſword ſhalt ſurely bleed;
Oh that I had it here!—Replies
The ſpeaking aſs, I thought you wiſe;
Can you complain, in former time
That want of ſpeed has been my crime;
If now I ſtop, is there not cauſe?
Behold yon ſword, and him that draws.—
Now Balaam ſees; on earth he falls,
While to him thus the angel calls:

With

With what unruly rage poſſeſt,
Smiteſt thou thus the harmleſs beaſt!
'Twas I withſtood thee; and I ſay,
Perverſe and wicked is thy way!
And had thine aſs not turn'd aſide,
By this bright ſword thyſelf had dy'd.—
The prophet cries, O LORD, forgive!
Great is my ſin; but let me live:
My guilt and blindneſs both I mourn;
If ſuch thy will, let me return.—
The angel ſays, You may proceed,
But what you do or ſay take heed!—
With joy to the impatient king
The princes the diviner bring;
To ſacrifice they go with ſpeed,
The prieſts attend, the victims bleed;
And while the loaded altars ſmoke,
They every idol-god invoke.
Soon as the morn adorn'd the ſkies,
And Moab's god * was ſeen to riſe,

Up

* The ſun, which they worſhipped.

Up an high mountain, by a wood
Where Baal's ſumptuous ſtatue ſtood,
From whence full on the wandering eye
Iſrael's fair tents in proſpect lie,
The monarch takes his prophet-gueſt,
When thus the ſire the king addreſt:
On this aſcent ſeven altars raiſe,
And to the God of Heaven ſhall blaze
On each a bullock and a ram;
And feed thyſelf the ſacred flame.
I to due diſtance ſhall proceed,
And bring thee word what is decreed.—
To diſtance then the prophet went,
And as he paus'd on the event
Jehovah met him in the way,
And inſtant told him what to ſay.
Soon to the monarch he return'd,
And with prophetic rapture burn'd;
He ſeem'd elated more than man,
And thus the ſacred ſtrain began:

By Moab's king from Aram brought,
I had indulg'd the daring thought
Iſrael to curſe, with impious pride,
While Jacob's ſons I had defy'd:
But God from his eternal throne
Demands this people as his own!
He over all his ſons will reign,
And every mortal curſe is vain!
From this vaſt mountain's ſtately height
See how he riſes on my ſight!
The object of peculiar care,
Which none on earth ſhall with him ſhare.
While numerous ſhall his ſons be found,
As grains of duſt that ſpread the ground,
O could I with this people join,
And make their every bleſſing mine!
In God's protection ſhelter'd lie,
And peaceful like his people die!—
What haſt thou ſaid! the king replies,
With anger flaſhing from his eyes,

I brought

I brought thee here to curſe my foes,
But lo, thy laviſh tongue beſtows
Bleſſings alone!—I dare expreſs
Not one ſmall accent more or leſs
Than GOD hath given; replies the ſage.—
The monarch checks his riſing rage,
And calm returns: Since that's the caſe,
I'll take thee to another place,
Where but a part we can behold;
Curſe them from thence, and gain my gold!—
To lofty Piſgah goes the train,
And climb the mountain's ſide with pain;
And here, ere further they proceed,
Seven rams and ſeven fat bullocks bleed;
The careful monarch feeds the fire,
While to a diſtance goes the ſire;
Full of the GOD he ſoon return'd,
His heart with holy rapture burn'd;
With great ideas heav'd his breaſt,
While thus the monarch he addreſt:

Riſe up, great prince! O Balak riſe!
And hear the language of the ſkies:
Can heaven's ſupreme eternal LORD
Ever repent, or change his word!
Shall mortal his decree reverſe!
Or when he bleſſes, dare to curſe!
How would the impious heathen ſcoff,
If he ſhould caſt his people off!
Be their perverſeneſs what it will,
He can forgive, and love them ſtill.
His conſtant preſence makes them ſing,
And all the armies ſhout their King.
From Egypt brought by dreadful might,
Should all the powers of hell unite,
With each deteſted magic charm,
They could not do GOD's Iſrael harm.
In GOD his ſtrength and glory lies;
He like a lion ſoon ſhall riſe,
And rend the nations; nor refrain
Till earth ſhall groan beneath the ſlain.—

Bliſſes

Bliſter thy babbling tongue, replies
The angry king, till ſtill it lies!—
The fire returns, Did not I ſay,
That God's impulſe I muſt obey?—
The cautious king his wrath reſtrains,
He takes the prophet 'croſs the plains,
And Peor's lofty top he gains:
Seven rural altars here he rais'd,
And as before the victims blaz'd.
The prophet now no further goes,
The will of God he clearly knows;
Acroſs the deſert rolls his eyes,
And Iſrael in his tents he ſpies.
Prophetic rapture fill'd his breaſt,
Which boldly thus he ſoon expreſt:
What glories burſt upon my ſight
When late I ſaw a Viſion bright,
And God before my wondering eyes
Made his beloved Iſrael riſe!

How

How beautiful thy tents appear,
O Iſrael, ſeen diſtinctly here!
After thy long laborious toil,
Thou mak'ſt the lonely deſert ſmile,
As gardens by the river ſide,
Or the tall cedars ſtately pride:
Vaſt as the drops the ſea contains,
Thy ſeed ſhall ſpread o'er Canaan's plains:
So high in earth ſhall riſe their fame,
Proud Amalek ſhall want a name!
GOD, by his ſtrong reſiſtleſs hand,
Hath brought thee from th' Egyptian land:
The nations round thou ſhalt devour,
And break their bones with mighty power;
As when the lion ſleeping lies,
The wretch that dares to rouſe him dies.
Thee with rich bleſſings load I muſt,
The wretch that curſes thee is curſt.—
No longer can the king contain,
But interrupts the ſacred ſtrain;

Be gone! he cries: I'll hear no more:
Still the old ſubject o'er and o'er!
Three times hath thy deluſive tongue
Perſiſted in the daring wrong:
Had I been us'd with due regard,
I well am able to reward;
But hence!—Full of prophetic fire,
Still undiſmay'd proceeds the ſire:
Great is the Ruler of the Skies,
Still on my view his viſions riſe;
Shall I for gain reluctant ſtand,
Or dare to alter his command!
For when I ſtand before his throne
He'll make his truth and juſtice known.
Bright as a ſtar that decks the ſkies,
Shall a great king from Iſrael riſe:
In his long line the ſceptre runs,
And he ſhall conquer Moab's ſons:
O'er hoſtile Edom he ſhall reign,
And Amalek's ſtout race be ſlain;

Nor ſhall the Kenite ſlaughter miſs:
But who ſhall live when GOD does this!—
So ſpake the bard. And then to bring
In humour the offended king,
Proceeds his laſt advice to give: *
And that the Moabites may live
Long unmoleſted on their plain,
And maſters of their land remain,
He bids him ſend their wily fair
The ſons of Iſrael to inſnare;
Towards their camp with ſongs to move,
And take them in the toils of love;
Their every lewd deſire allow,
And make them to their idols bow.
Such conduct, ſays the crafty ſire,
Will quickly rouſe JEHOVAH's ire;
And when without their GOD they go,
They are a deſpicable foe.

* Rev. ii. 14.

HISTORY the TWELFTH.

The Iſraelites ſeduced to Idolatry by the Moabitiſh and Midianitiſh Women.

Numbers, ch. xxv.

STILL in their camp the tribes abide,
Nor dreamt of plots on Moab's ſide:
But ſoon the deep deſigning king
Prepares to bring about the thing,
Late by the old diviner taught;
And Iſrael in the ſnare is caught.
Moab's and Midian's daughters join
To bring about the lewd deſign:
In a bright ſhining troop they move,
And ſing looſe ſongs of lawleſs love,
Taking each method to inſpire
God's people with forbidden fire.
The dire infection quickly runs
Thro' all the veins of Iſrael's ſons:

Boldly they ſeize the willing fair,
When to oblige them is their care;
And that they may their ſuit allow,
They to the gods of Moab bow;
And follow their forbidden loves,
Amongſt the idols and the groves.
With them in ſacrifice they join,
And worſhip at each idol ſhrine:
Their rites obſcene and feaſts partake,
And GOD's high worſhip thus forſake.
Their foul revolt and impious deeds
JEHOVAH to avenge proceeds.
To Moſes ſoon the order came
That thro' the tribes he muſt proclaim
To every prince without delay,
That each revolter he ſhall ſlay
Amongſt his men. Nor this alone;
But GOD, to make his anger known,
To death's dread angel order gives,
And peſtilence amongſt them drives

Wide-

Wide-waſting from the infected ſky,
And Iſrael's ſons by thouſands die.
The weeping tribes their guilt confeſs,
And round God's holy altar preſs;
When with a Midianitiſh dame
Full in their view bold Zimri came;
He to his tent the damſel takes,
When Phinehas an atonement makes:
His eye purſu'd the princely pair
To Zimri's tent, and haſty there
He boldly follow'd with a ſpear:
His anger kindling at the view,
He with full force the javelin threw;
Thro' both their hearts the weapon drove,
Sad product of unlawful love!
Swift guſhing from the double wound,
The blood in ſtreams o'erſpread the ground;
And when in death the pair were laid,
The dreadful peſtilence was ſtaid;

But twice twelve thouſand warriors lay
To death's deſtructive power a prey.
JEHOVAH's voice applauds the deed,
And endleſs prieſthood is decreed
To zealous Phinehas and his ſeed.

HISTORY THE THIRTEENTH.

The Deſtruction of the Midianites.

Numbers, ch. xxxi.

AND now in wrath JEHOVAH roſe
Againſt his people's crafty foes;
And gives command that they prepare
On Midian's ſons to turn the war:
But ere they in the courſe proceed,
Or Canaan's mightieſt nations bleed,
The GOD of Iſrael gives command
That all her armies number'd ſtand:
Then thro' the camp with prudent care
The heralds of the hoſt repair,

The

The numbers of the warriors take,
And the report to Moſes make.
Six hundred thouſand able men,
From twenty years and upward, then
(A number much about the ſame
As when the tribes from Egypt came)
Demand the honours of the field,
Compleatly arm'd with ſword and ſhield.
But not a ſingle man was found
In all the numerous armies round,
That by the ſacred mountain's ſide
Moſes had number'd, when the pride
Of haughty Egypt was laid low,
Now almoſt forty years ago:
All in the deſert found their end,
Except brave Joſhua, and his friend
Stout Caleb, who from Eſhcol's ſtream
Laden with grapes exulting came.
Then Iſrael's God minutely draws
Some plain and neceſſary laws,

Ordain'd

Ordain'd amongſt the tribes to ſtand
When they poſſeſs the promis'd land;
And gives in charge amongſt the reſt,
At Hepher's daughters * juſt requeſt,
When in a houſe male iſſue fails,
The daughters, in default of males,
Their father's lands may jointly claim,
If marriage makes their tribe the ſame.
And now the ready hoſts prepare
On Midian's land to drive the war.
One thouſand of each tribe appear
Elate and eager to go there:
The prieſt the ſacred trumpet blows.
And to the war exulting goes.
Then like a torrent's furious courſe,
That ruſhes with reſiſtleſs force,
And ſweeps acroſs the trembling plain
Till neither houſe nor tree remain,
On Midian's hoſt GOD's army drives
Till all their warriors loſe their lives:

* The daughters of Zelophehad, the ſon of Hephir.

Five warlike kings in battle bled,
And lay amonſt the vulgar dead.
The old diviner, who remain'd
Still at a diſtance from his land,
And with the tribes of Midian dwelt,
The ſword's ſharp point amongſt them felt:
Among the heaps of ſlain he lies,
And for his vile contrivance dies.

The conquerors then to plunder turn,
And all the goodly cities burn:
Vaſt booty take: The tender fair,
And all the children's lives they ſpare:
Then to the camp the captives bring,
While great JEHOVAH's praiſe they ſing.
The prophet gives the warriors blame,
Becauſe the women with them came:
For theſe, he cries, have been your bane,
And muſt not in the camp remain;
To righteous ſlaughter then proceed,
And let the fair ſeducers bleed;

Let

Let the male children with them ſhare;
But all the female infants ſpare.—
Whoe'er had kill'd, or touch'd the ſlain.
Seven days without the camp remain;
Then, as JEHOVAH's word decreed,
To ſhare the plunder they proceed;
Half of the ſpoil the nation gains,
The reſt the warriors ſhare remains;
And the glad train, with one accord,
Preſent an offering to the LORD:
For when from mighty nations ſlain
They to their friends return again,
And number over all their hoſt,
Not one amongſt them all was loſt.

HISTORY THE FOURTEENTH.

The Petition of the Reubenites and Gadites, for the Land on that Side Jordan where they then were.

Numbers, ch. xxxii.

TO Reuben's tribe, and Gad's, remains,
Wide ſpread acroſs the verdant plains,
Vaſt flocks of ſheep, and herds of kine,
Which in the flowery vallies ſhine.
And as near Jordan's banks are ſeen
Fat paſtures cloath'd in living green;
And proper all the land to breed
All ſorts of cattle, and to feed;
The tribes in one petition join'd,
That theſe rich lands might be aſſign'd
As their poſſeſſion, on this ſide
The mighty Jordan's ſwelling tide.
The prophet the requeſt denies,
And to the warriors thus replies:

And have I liv'd to ſee the day
When Reuben's ſons, with ſad diſmay,
Wandering on Jordan's winding ſhore,
Shall long to ſhine in arms no more?
The warrior chief that thus proceeds,
Sullies his former noble deeds,
And makes his brethren's hearts to fail.
Should now ſuch diſcontent prevail,
Your all is loſt. Have you forgot
The ſtory of your fathers lot,
Whoſe murmuring fear provok'd the LORD,
And made him ſpeak the awful word,
That Canaan they ſhould ne'er behold?
And now the troops, elate and bold,
In ſhining arms all muſter'd ſtand,
In proſpect of the promis'd land,
You riſe up in your fathers ſtead,
And take the courſes of the dead,
To make JEHOVAH's wrath to burn,
And all his people back return

Into

Into the deſert, there to die.—
This ſaid, the warrior chiefs draw nigh,
And to the prophet thus reply:
Think not, my lord, thy ſervants e'er
Will ſhun the horrid face of war:
'Croſs Jordan's ſtreams we'll boldly go,
And face our brethren's every foe;
And when our armies croſs the plain,
We'll march the foremoſt of the train:
Folds for our cattle we will rear,
And leave our wives and children here:
But when the noiſe of war ſhall ceaſe,
And all our brethren dwell in peace,
Theſe choſen plains we will regain,
And gladly join our kindred train.—
If ſuch your choice, the ſeer replies,
All Gilead's land before you lies;
This to your lot ſhall be aſſign'd,
If you your ſacred promiſe mind:

But if you diſregard the word
You have declar'd before the LORD,
This promiſe ſhall be henceforth void.—
To this the warrior train reply'd:
On this condition, this alone,
We hold the country as our own;
Our glory 'tis to face the foe,
And arm'd before the tribes we'll go;
And as our conduct in the field,
Do thou to the petition yield.—
No longer now the ſire withſtands,
But to the tribes divides the lands.

HISTORY THE FIFTEENTH.

The Death of Moſes.

Deut. ch. xxxiv.

AT Shittim ſtill the tribes remain'd,
And now the fortieth year had gain'd;
They on the verge of Canaan ſtand,
And the laſt month was nigh at hand.
The prophet, ere he leaves his charge,
Calls all the people, and, at large,
To give his laſt advice proceeds,
And tell JEHOVAH's dreadful deeds.
He ſets before the people's eyes
Where all their peace and ſafety lies;
And full before their ſight he lays
Their paſt rebellion, and their ways;
Traces the deſert thro' in thought,
And ſhews what wonders GOD had wrought;

Then

Then lets the liſt'ning armies know,
Croſs Jordan's ſtreams they are to go;
And tells them, that the only way
To happineſs is to obey;
For then their God will fight, and all
Their numerous foes will ſurely fall:
With full ſucceſs they will be crown'd,
And rule the mighty kingdoms round.
But if againſt their God they turn,
And his moſt holy altar ſpurn;
To idols their obeiſance make,
And their unhallow'd rites partake;
They ſurely can expect no leſs
Than dreadful trouble and diſtreſs:
If idol gods they ſerve, they all
Shall into ſuch dejection fall
That the fierce heathen nations round
Will ſmite and utterly confound
The ſons of Iſrael, and their race,
Who muſt to every ill give place;

Vex'd,

Vex'd, harraſs'd, broken and diſtreſt,
Diſpirited, and far from reſt,
With terror they their ſtate ſhall view,
And trembling flee, when none purſue.
With all his might the prophet tries
To teach the people to be wiſe;
Repeats JEHOVAH's various laws,
And the juſt line of duty draws;
Brings every danger to their ſight,
And labours hard to lead them right;
Like a good watchman warning gives,
And fain would bleſs them while he lives.
Directed to one point he brought
The force of language and of thought,
And every powerful method join'd,
To fix inſtruction on the mind:
Then, in his own triumphant lays,
The prophet ſings JEHOVAH's praiſe.
With native force, and Hebrew fire,
He ſtrings his wild majeſtic lyre:

The

The flowing numbers round him throng,
And breezes bear the ſacred ſong.
Affected with the heavenly ſtrain,
As ſtatues fix'd the tribes remain,
And all their mighty armies round
With rapture hear the lofty ſound.
But near a great event now lies,
Which checks the nation's riſing joys.
Though the much-lov'd, exalted man,
Now fifty years his courſe had ran
Beyond the threeſcore years and ten,
The bounds of life to common men,
Bright ſhone the evening of his day;
And ſtill unconſcious of decay
His nature ſtood: But GOD's high will
Demands his prophet up the hill,
On Piſgah's * lofty top to ſtand,
And thence to view the promis'd land;

Then

* Piſgah, Hor, Peor, Nebo, and Abiram, were a chain of mountains between the deſert and the river Jordan.

Then peaceful on the earth to lie,
And in his GOD's embraces die.
This to the tribes declares the ſeer,
And Iſrael's ſons in grief appear:
The tender tears in rivers flow,
And all the armies join in woe.
The prophet then his bleſſing gives
To his lov'd Iſrael while he lives;
Each tribe apart diſtinctly names,
To each their future lot proclaims;
Then the united nation bleſt,
By GOD ordain'd to peace and reſt;
The GOD that rides upon the cloud,
In ſovereign triumph o'er the proud.
Great bleſſings, Iſrael, are thy ſhare,
Thou object of JEHOVAH's care!
Like a broad ſhield he will defend;
He is thy Great Eternal Friend!
And when thy foes upon thee frown,
Thou by his power ſhalt tread them down.

While tears expreſs the nation's woes,
The prophet up the mountain goes;
The people follow with their eyes,
As by ſlow ſteps he's ſeen to riſe:
Their love his worth and greatneſs tell,
And take a long and laſt farewell.
The mountain's crown at length he gains,
And on the lofty height remains
Till God deſcends, and to his view
All Canaan's land proceeds to ſhew,
Which Iſrael's tribes ſhall ſoon divide,
Beyond great Jordan's ſwelling tide.
The vaſt extent of ground that lay
Between Euphrates and the ſea;
The various valleys, and the plains,
With ſtrengthen'd ſight the prophet gains;
For great JEHOVAH clears his eyes,
While Canaan's miſty mountains riſe.
Theſe are the lands, he ſaid, I give,
And here my Iſrael's ſons ſhall live:

Theſe plainly thou haſt ſeen; but know,
Thou over thither ſhall not go.—
Elate, and full of heavenly joys,
On the cold ground the prophet lies;
When without pain his ſpirit fled,
And fearleſs join'd the mighty dead.

Then God, from his eternal throne,
To Michael * thus his will made known;
Michael, whoſe glories brighteſt riſe
Amongſt the armies of the ſkies:
On Piſgah's top, his ſpirit fled,
My much-lov'd prophet now lies dead;
Michael, I to thy care aſſign,
And be the laſt dear office thine,
The rights of burial to beſtow:
The ſacred grave let no man know.†—

* Jude, ver. 9.

† It is ſuppoſed, the reaſon why the grave of Moſes was concealed, was leſt the Iſraelites ſhould pay ſuperſtitious honours to the tomb of ſo great a prophet.

The prince of angels takes his way
Where cold in death the prophet lay;
And in a ſilent valley gave
The greateſt of mankind a grave.
The weeping nation thirty days
The tender rites of mourning pays:
Their mighty loſs they much deplore;
For ſuch a prophet comes no more.

HISTORY the SIXTEENTH.

Joſhua ſucceeds Moſes in the Government: Is encouraged by a Viſion: Gives Notice to the Armies to prepare to croſs Jordan; and ſends Two Spies to Jericho.

Joſhua, ch. i. ii.

THE man of God, before he dy'd,
That Iſrael's tribes might be ſupply'd
With a brave man to take his place,
And lead to war the choſen race,

On

On warlike Joſhua laid his hands,
And gave the people his commands
To honour him, and to obey,
And follow where he led the way.
Amongſt the mightieſt where he ſtood,
Before they paſs'd o'er Jordan's flood,
A blaze of glory round him ſhone,
And Iſrael's GOD himſelf made known.
My ſervant Moſes now is dead,
And thou art captain in his ſtead:
To thee devolves the great command,
To lead my ſons to Canaan's land:
Then riſe! and croſs great Jordan's ſtream,
And make all Canaan know thy name.
Riſe in thy might! Thy toil I crown,
And tread each bold oppoſer down.
My people ſhall the land divide
From great Euphrates' eaſtern tide,
To where the ſun at cloſe of day
Hides his bright forehead in the ſea.

Renown'd

Renown'd for valour thou ſhalt be,
Nor one on earth a match for thee;
Of common or gigantic ſize,
The man that dares oppoſe thee dies!
As Moſes late partook my love,
From thee my preſence ſhall not move:
I, in each dreadful day of fight,
Am with thee ſtrong in all my might.
Take courage then! and boldly ſtand;
You ſurely ſhall poſſeſs the land:
But never let thy ſight withdraw
From the great copy of my law;
This thou ſhalt make thy chief delight,
There meditate by day and night;
Firm in its ſacred paths abide,
And never from them turn aſide.
Then I thy bold attempts will bleſs,
And proſper thee with full ſucceſs.
Fear not! JEHOVAH with thee goes,
To crown thy toil, and cruſh thy foes.—

The

The hero to the charge attends,
And thro' the hoſt the heralds ſends,
To warn the armies to prepare
The third day to begin the war;
Paſs over Jordan's ſwelling wave,
And ſeize the lands JEHOVAH gave.
To Reuben's tribe, and Gad's, that ſtand
Now on their own allotted land,
The hero ſends, and lets them know,
That over Jordan they muſt go,
Arm'd for the war, and face the foe;
Till Canaan's land ſhall be poſſeſt,
And GOD ſhall give their brethren reſt.
Their promiſe ſuch to Moſes made,
His words the willing tribes obey'd.
The thoughtful chief, his men to prove,
Before the mighty armies move,
To two young men, that willing ſtand,
Gave his inſtruction and command
To croſs the ſtream, and view the land.

To Jericho they took their way,
And there arrive at cloſe of day;
When at a public inn they call,
Which ſtood upon the city wall.
Soon to the king report was made
That two young Iſraelites had ſtray'd;
And they, tho' come to view the land,
At Rahab's houſe were entertain'd.
The monarch to the hoſteſs ſent,
Explains to her the men's intent;
And as their baſe deſign they know,
Commands ſhe will not let them go.
By Heaven inſpir'd, the careful dame
Had hid the ſpies when firſt they came:
What the bold ſtrangers had in view,
And danger of their taſk, ſhe knew.
On the houſe-top ſecure they lay,
Cover'd with ſtalks of flax, till day
Departed from the weſtern ſkies;
And ſhe, to ſave them, thus replies:

The men you ſeek, were here, 'tis true,
But they in ſilent care withdrew
Before they ſhut the city gate:
Purſue! you may not be too late.
I did not underſtand their aim,
Or where they went, or whence they came.—

A band of horſemen then proceed,
And ſearch around, with careful ſpeed;
Along the coaſt and winding ſhore
Where Jordan's ſwelling ſurges roar,
The warrior train with care purſu'd,
But whom they wanted never view'd.

Then to the youths approach'd the dame
(Before they went to reſt ſhe came):
I am convinc'd, ſhe cry'd, the LORD
To Iſrael will perform his word;
And the fair plains of Canaan give,
Where his beloved ſons ſhall live:
For all the people of our land,
In deep dejection trembling ſtand,

They having heard how Gon proceeds
To make your way by dreadful deeds.
The roaring ſea his power divides,
And makes your paſſage thro' the tides.
The giant Og, and Sihon ſlain,
What hope to us can now remain?
How can we in the field appear,
When all our armies quake with fear?
Then, as my kindneſs you diſcern,
Let me intreat your juſt return;
For know, ere you the town had view'd,
You were diſcover'd, and purſu'd;
And had not I my gueſts deny'd,
Before this time you both had dy'd:
Then when your armies take our town,
And beat our king and warriors down;
When ſtreams of blood o'erſpread the ground,
That mercy ſhew, which you have found;
According to my kindneſs give,
And let myſelf and kindred live:

Let

Let none of us your favour miſs;
Swear by the LORD you will do this!—
The men reply, In thanks we join,
And peace and ſafety ſhall be thine
If by thy ſkill conceal'd we gain
Our kindred armies on the plain.—
To their requeſt the hoſteſs yields,
And let them down into the fields
Thro' her own window, with a cord,
When thus ſhe gave the warning word:
Venture not yet upon the plain,
With all your ſpeed the mountain gain,
And there conceal'd three days remain.
When the purſuers nothing learn,
Before that time they will return;
And you, by prudence in delay,
May then in ſafety go your way.—
The men reply, The oath we ſwear,
And thee and thine will ſurely ſpare.

Bring all thy kindred to thine home,
And let not one amongſt them roam,
But cloſely in thy houſe remain,
For in the ſtreets they may be ſlain:
To all alike we will be kind,
And as a token thou ſhalt bind,
Conſpicuous to all the town,
This ſcarlet cord that let us down
In the broad window we came through;
This will our conquering armies view,
And ſave your lives, if ye be true:
But if your conduct falſe appear,
Then from our oath we will be clear.—
Let it be ſo, the dame replies:
The cord ſhe in the window ties.
The men depart, the mountain gain,
And there three days conceal'd remain.
Having explor'd the country round,
The fierce purſuers nothing found:

Back

Back to the city they return,
And of the ſpies no news can learn.
The men with ſafety croſs'd the ſtream,
And joyful to their brethren came.
The whole adventure they relate,
And ſhew the land's enfeebled ſtate:
To Joſhua ſay, Give thou command,
And let us go and ſeize the land;
Aſſur'd of conqueſt we go there,
For all the nations quake with fear.

HISTORY THE SEVENTEENTH.

The Paſſage over Jordan; and the Siege of Jericho.

Joſhua, ch. iii. iv. v. vi.

SOON as the morn's aſcending ray
Had ſtreak'd the eaſt with promis'd day,
The general roſe, and gave command
That Iſrael's tents no longer ſtand

At Shittim; when to Jordan's ſtream
The armed tribes of Iſrael came:*
Cloſe by the ſacred river's ſide
Three days the eager troops abide;
Then ſpake the chief, To-morrow you
Your Great Deliverer's power ſhall view;
Acroſs great Jordan's furging wave
Your God now leads you ſtrong to ſave,
His holy prieſts will go before,
Bearing the ark they leave the ſhore.
Let all your armies diſtant tread,
And keep the path where they are led;
A way ye are not us'd to go;
Sure pledge of victory o'er the foe.—
Then to the general ſpake the Lord:
To thee I will perform my word,

And

* The laſt encampment of the Iſraelites was on the banks of Jordan, to which they had come by ten removes from Kadeſh-barnea; 1 mount Hor, 2 Zalmonah, 3 Punon, 4 Oboth, 5 Ije-abarim, 6 Dibon-gad, 7 Almon-diblathaim, 8 mount Abarim, 9 Shittim, 10 Jordan.

And will this day let Iſrael ſee,
As late with Moſes, ſo with thee
My preſence reſts. Without delay,
Acroſs great Jordan lies your way:
My holy prieſts the ark ſhall bear:
Command thou them when they come there,
When on the margin of the flood
They ſee the mighty power of GOD,
When the vaſt waters from them fly,
And leave the wonderous channel dry,
That in the midſt they take their ſtand,
And ſee the armies ſafe at land.—
Then his full voice the hero rear'd,
Which the glad tribes of Iſrael heard;
The ſounds throughout the hoſt he ſent,
Which fir'd the nation as they went.
Riſe up, O Iſrael, and ſurvey
The growing glories of the day:
The GOD that rules the ſurging wave
Now goes before thee ſtrong to ſave;

He in his great deſign proceeds.
And manifeſts his mighty deeds;
And by his deeds it may be known
That Canaan's land will be thy own.
His holy ark will go before,
Where the wild waves of Jordan roar;
And when the prieſts which bear the ſame
Touch with their feet the rolling ſtream,
The mighty current ſhall divide,
And ſtand on heaps on either ſide.—
The hero's voice the nation hears,
And ready for their march appears.
The prieſts at diſtance paſs before,
Advancing on the verdant ſhore:
Soon as their feet had touch'd the flood,
The ebbing waters own'd the God,
Whoſe ſoverein power conſtrains the tide,
And makes the mighty waves divide;
While all the armies on dry ground
A ſafe and eaſy paſſage found.

In

In the deep channel, far from ſhore,
Where the wild waves of Jordan roar,
The prieſts and ark were ſeen to ſtand,
Till all the tribes were ſafe at land.
The LORD then to the general ſpake,
From every tribe a warrior take,
And that this great event be known
Let every man take up a ſtone
From whence the prieſts are ſeen to ſtand;
And raiſe a pillar on the land,
Memorial of this matchleſs day.—
Joſhua commands without delay,
And twelve ſtout warriors take their way
To where the prieſts and ark abide,
Where late had roll'd the ſwelling tide.
A mighty ſtone each man ſoon rears,
The load upon his ſhoulders bears;
And with the weighty marble gains
The ſhores of Jordan, and the plains.

With pious care the general then
(While on the ſhore he leaves his men)
Into the midſt his way purſues,
And Jordan's vaſt dry channel views.
Then where the prieſt and ark ſtill ſtand,
With twelve large ſtones that lay at hand,
To raiſe a pillar he proceeds,
Memorial of JEHOVAH's deeds;
Which hath to after ages been
Plain in the midſt of Jordan ſeen,
Waſh'd with the waves, and white with foam.
Now from JEHOVAH orders come
That all the prieſts which long had ſtood
Where lately Jordan roll'd his flood,
Should leave their ſtation, and regain
Their kindred armies on the plain.
In ſolemn ſtate the train proceeds,
Full of JEHOVAH's mighty deeds:
Bearing the ark they make for land;
And when the ſhore their feet had gain'd,

As

As when a ſtorm outrageous raves,
Along the channel fly the waves,
Rage, ſmoak and foam, with dreadful roar,
And daſhing break upon the ſhore:
High o'er the banks the waters riſe,
And Iſrael's hoſt before them flies,
Encamp on Gilgal's plains, and there
The ſtones they brought from Jordan rear;
Which may to after times proclaim
The glories of JEHOVAH's name;
And children's children thence be taught
The way which GOD their fathers brought.

Thro' Canaan's land it ſoon was known
What Iſrael's GOD had for them done;
How he divided Jordan's tide,
And them a wonderous way ſupply'd.
From place to place the rumour runs,
Vaſt terror ſeizes Canaan's ſons;
And to a low condition brings
Her various cities and her kings.

But ere God's armies take the field,
And make all Canaan's warrior's yield,
They are commanded to unite
In circumcision's sacred rite.
For while the tribes full forty years
Had trac'd the desert, it appears
This holy rite they had refrain'd:
But having reach'd the promis'd land
On all this sacred mark's impress,
And till their wounds are heal'd they rest.
The passover they next prepare,
In which the joyful nation share:
Next day of Canaan's corn they eat,
And every day the fare repeat;
Remaining still on Jordan's shore,
And manna now appears no more.
Near Jericho the army waits,
And close are shut the city gates;
When prudent care the general calls
To view the ramparts, and the walls.

There

There as he ſtands, appears in ſight
A noble form, in armour bright,
With a drawn ſword. If friend or foe
Brave Joſhua boldly aſks to know;
Immediate brightening on his view,
The heavenly form the hero knew,
And inſtant made this ſhort reply:
Of the LORD's hoſt the captain I.—
Joſhua, with reverence profound,
Bow'd down before him to the ground,
And aſks to hear his great command.
The place on which thy feet now ſtand
Is holy, the bright viſion ſays:
Then looſe thy ſhoes.—The chief obeys.
Then ſpake the Ruler of the Skies,
The city now before thee lies;
Into thy hand it ſhall be given,
And thou ſhalt know the love of heaven.
Let thy ſtout chiefs, and warriors all,
Encompaſs round the city wall,

And while the men of war go round
Let ſeven young prieſts with rams horns ſound;
And while the rural trumpets blow,
The ark around the town ſhall go;
The warriors in the rear ſhall fall;
In ſilence march, nor touch the wall.
Six days ſucceſſive take your way
Around the city once a day;
The ſeventh you ſeven times round ſhall go,
Then a long blaſt the trumpets blow.—
With ſhouts the warriors ſhake the ſkies,
When flat the wall before them lies.
Thus great JEHOVAH's orders ſtand;
And thus the general gave command.
Six days around the walls they went;
The townſmen wonder'd what they meant:
The ſeventh at early dawn they riſe;
Now a great taſk before them lies.
Seven times they march'd around the walls,
When to them thus the general calls:

Shout,

Shout, all ye armies! and proclaim
The terrors of JEHOVAH's name;
Shout! for the city is your own;
Now make your matchleſs valour known:
To death the LORD the nation gives;
Put to the ſword whatever lives;
And all their treaſure and their pride
Shall the devouring flames abide.
To plunder let no warrior turn,
But let the hateful riches burn:
To Rahab only mercy give;
She ſav'd the ſpies, and ſhe ſhall live,
With all her kindred.—Then around
With ſhouts the armies ſhake the ground;
Flat fall the walls; They march with ſpeed:
The warriors fall, the townſmen bleed;
Both man and beaſt o'erſpread the ground,
And fire and ſlaughter rages round:
Rahab and all her friends are ſpar'd,
As the two ſpies had late declar'd.

Wrapp'd

Wrapp'd in one bright ſurrounding blaze,
Great Joſhua then the town ſurveys:
Curs'd be the wretch! he loudly cries,
By whom theſe impious walls ſhall riſe;
Juſt heaven in vengeance will proceed,
And make him mourn the hateful deed
Who dares rebuild this wicked place,
In the deſtruction of his race.

HISTORY THE EIGHTEENTH.

The Treſpaſs and Death of Achan; and the Deſtruction of Ai.

Joſhua, ch. vii. viii.

BUT Achan, Carmi's warlike ſon,
A covetous bold deed had done,
Which caus'd JEHOVAH's wrath to burn,
And made the tribes of Iſrael mourn.

Before

Before the palace turrets blaze,
With greedy eye the chief ſurveys
A purple robe, from Shinar brought,
With rich device of gold inwrought;
This, with a golden ſword he takes,
And ſilver vaſe; then private makes
For his own tent, and, void of fear,
Digs in the earth, and hides them there.
Unconſcious of the fatal deed,
The general bids the war proceed;
And ſoon to Ai ſends his ſpies,
A city which near Bethel lies.
Soon as the men the place had view'd
To Joſhua they their way purſu'd,
And to their general they declare
That all the hoſt need not go there;
For few their warriors are and weak;
Three thouſand valiant men may break
Their ranks, and beat them to the ground.
Three thouſand men the general found:

Eager for war they leave the plain,
Where all the armies ſtill remain.
The coming war the townſmen know,
And boldly ſally on the foe,
With mighty ſhouts which rend the ſkies,
And Iſrael's hoſt before them flies.
With tranſport they their terror view'd,
And far as Shebarim purſu'd.
Broken, dejected and diſmay'd,
The Iſraelites their rout ſurvey'd;
Behind them leave near forty dead,
And back they to their brethren fled.
The general and the princes all
In grief extreme, directly fall
Before the LORD; and each there lies
Until the evening ſacrifice.
Ah! mighty GOD! then ſpake the chief,
Full of diſtreſs and pungent grief,
Why haſt thou brought us 'croſs the tide
Of ſwelling Jordan, and deny'd

Thy

Thy further preſence, and thine aid?
Oh that we had at Gilead ſtay'd!
Lord have I liv'd to ſee the day
When Iſrael's ſons in dire diſmay
Shall turn their backs upon the foe!
This great event ſhould Canaan know
Then all her kings would on us riſe,
And by one ſtroke thy Iſrael dies.—
Riſe from the ground, the Lord replies;
And if the cauſe thou ſeek'ſt to know
Why Iſrael flees before the foe,
Know that theſe dire diſaſters ſpring
From the abhorr'd accurſed thing
Which now amongſt the hoſt is found:
Nor can your armies ſtand their ground
Till this offence is purg'd away.
Summon the tribes by break of day:
The guilty let the lots decide;
And when by fire the wretch hath dy'd

Then let your conquering armies go
And boldly face their every foe.—
  Soon as the morn in glory roſe,
Amongſt the tribes the general goes:
They all appear; the lots they caſt;
On Achan falls the charge at laſt.
The crime he ſeeks not to evade,
But tells them where the things were laid.
Soon by command the heralds went
And found the ſpoils within the tent:
Theſe to the armies then were ſhewn,
And Achan periſh'd not alone:
For his whole ſubſtance with him came,
All ſentenc'd to devouring flame.
To Achor's ſilent vale they go,
And heavy ſtones at Achan throw:
Himſelf and all his goods they burn,
Heap high the ſtones, and then return.
  Then Joſhua, by Divine command,
Prepares before the town to ſtand,

Where

Where late his worſted warriors fled;
When to the armies thus he ſaid:
Take thirty thouſand valiant men;
In ſilence march to Ai; then
In ambuſh lie behind the wall:
To-morrow I ſhall come with all
Your brethren. When our flight ye view,
And ſee the townſmen ſwift purſue,
Haſte from your place, the city burn,
While at that inſtant we return:
You boldly from the town proceed,
And by us both they all ſhall bleed;
Nor young or old the ſword ſhall ſpare-
The plunder let the warriors ſhare.—
As thus propos'd, they take the town,
And tread the mightieſt warriors down.
The king alone alive they take,
And him a dire example make,
Hang'd on a tree till evening tide.
No age nor ſex but they deſtroy'd:

Then

Then all the hoſt to plunder turn,
And the devoted city burn.
An altar then the general rais'd,
And all the hoſt JEHOVAH prais'd.
Large ſacrifices they prepare,
The ſacred feaſt the nation ſhare:
And Joſhua, ere the troops withdraw,
Engrav'd on ſtones JEHOVAH's law:
This to the liſtening tribes he reads,
And then prepares for greater deeds.

HISTORY THE NINETEENTH.

The League with the Gibeonites; and the Defeat of the Confederate Kings.

Joſhua, ch. ix. x.

THE great ſucceſs which Joſhua found
Quickly alarm'd the country round;
The dreadful ſlaughter which he made
Makes all the men of war afraid;
And various kings of Canaan join
To circumvent his great deſign;
But Gibeon's * ſons, of Hivite race,
Whoſe country lay but little ſpace
From where the tents of Iſrael ſtand,
Contriv'd by fraud to ſave their land.
Gibeon, a city rich and gay,
O'er three more cities † held its ſway.

In

* Gibeon was about nine miles from Gilgal, where the army of the Iſraelites lay.

† Theſe cities were Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirath-jearim.

In dep deceit the townſmen join,
And to accompliſh their deſign
A train of elders they prepare
To ſeem as tho' they came from far.
Lean were the beaſts on which they rode,
And old the ſacks which held their food:
Rough were their beards, and rude their hair;
Their clouted ſhoes were patch'd with care:
Worn were the cloaths which wrapp'd them round,
With thongs their leathern bottles bound:
Mouldy and dry was all their bread;
To Iſrael's princes they were led,
And ſly diſſembling thus they ſaid:
With wonder hath our nation heard
What great events have late appear'd;
And with juſt admiration view
Your wiſdom, and your valour too.
No hoſtile methods will we take,
But would a league in friendſhip make,

And

And be your ſervants.—Soon reply
The Hebrew princes, Say how nigh
Your nation may to Gilgal lie?—
From hills and ſtreams unknown to fame,
In ſultry climes, your ſervants came,
Rejoin'd the ſtrangers: And we ſtand
Far diſtant from our native land:
Yet to our ear the fame proceeds
Of Iſrael's God's immortal deeds;
How all your tribes he made his care,
And whelm'd in waves the Egyptian war;
Then Og and Sihon overthrew,
And dry'd up Jordan's ſtreams for you.
For this the elders of our race
Have ſent us o'er a mighty ſpace
Of hills and vales, and dreary plains;
And if our land your friendſhip gains
We ſhall be bleſs'd. Our bread ſurvey,
Mouldy and dry through length of way;

And our old tatter'd garments view,
Which when we firſt ſet out were new.—
The unſuſpecting princes heard,
And no deceit or fraud they fear'd;
But made a league with one accord,
And ſware unto them by the LORD
That they henceforth would favour give,
And let the friendly nation live;
Unconſcious of their near abode,
For they conſulted not their GOD.

Elate and glad, the ſtranger band
Their native city ſoon regain'd:
But when the third bright morning roſe,
Thro' Iſrael's hoſt the rumour goes
That they, unthinking and unknown,
To Gibeon's men had favour ſhewn.
Throughout the hoſt deep murmurs riſe,
And the aſſembled army cries,
Each bold deceiver juſtly dies.

The

The princes in their cauſe appear,
And to deſtroy them juſtly fear,
Becauſe they by their oath are bound:
But ſince we have their falſhood found,
In ſlavery they ſhall be join'd
To every ſervile taſk aſſign'd.

To Gibeon then the armies go,
And noble Joſhua aſks to know
Why in deceit they durſt appear
As ſtrangers, when they dwelt ſo near?
To ſave our lives, they all reply'd,
Since Canaan's king's muſt be deſtroy'd:
For Iſrael's God, we underſtand,
Has given his people all their land.—
The chief replies, Your lives we give;
But as our bondſmen you ſhall live;
Upon our armies doom'd to wait;
Nor can you hope a milder fate.

Jeruſalem's great monarch learn'd
That Gibeon's men their backs had turn'd;

Had meanly left the common cauſe,
And leagu'd with Joſhua. Soon he draws
Out his vaſt army; and he brings
Three more of Canaan's ſouthern kings,
With theſe from mighty Hebron came,
Dreadful in arms, and fond of fame,
The warlike Anakims that riſe
Of vaſt gigantic ſtrength and ſize;
Down from their mountains on the plain
Pours the enormous giant train;
With all the horrid din of war
Their mighty armies ſhout from far;
Their banners blaze, and all around
The iron chariots ſhake the ground.
To Gibeon's walls they ſoon proceed,
And fire and ſlaughter is decreed.
The Gibeonites to Joſhua ſend,
And beg that he will ſtand their friend;
For Canaan's kings around us riſe,
And if you aid not, Gibeon dies.—

Elate,

Elate, and eager to engage,
And make the mighty battle rage,
The ſons of Iſrael ready ſtand,
Awaiting their great chief's command:
And God enjoins the tribes to go,
Aſſur'd of victory o'er the foe.
All night they march; at break of day
They put the battle in array;
Attack the hoſt with matchleſs might,
And put the armies all to flight.
With ſhouts on ſhouts their rout they view,
And far as Makkedah purſue;
The plains around with ſlaughter ſpread,
And pile on heaps the mighty dead.
The broken troops no more can form,
And on them falls a dreadful ſtorm;
The lowering ſkies upon them frown,
And hailſtones beat the warriors down.
Then, leſt the favour of the night
Should cover and protect their flight,

By heaven's impulſe the general cries,
With hands uplifted to the ſkies,
Thou ſhining ruler of the day,
A while thy burning chariot ſtay;
O'er Gibeon's ſtately towers remain,
Till all God's enemies be ſlain.
And thou, O night's inconſtant queen,
Still let thy friendly face be ſeen
O'er Aijalon's delightful vale:
He ſpake.—The wonderous words prevail:
The orbs ſtand ſtill, without delay
To crown the glories of the day.
The tribes an eaſy conqueſt found,
And beat the armies to the ground;
While their five kings, their lives to ſave,
Were hid in one deep dark-mouth'd cave.
The general heard; a troop ſoon goes,
And with huge ſtones the mouth they cloſe:

They

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Engraved for Fellowes's Hist. of the Bible.

The Five Kings hanged, by order of Joshua.

They then purſue the routed train,
And all their empty cities gain,*
Heaping the country round with ſlain:
Then all the ſouth of Canaan take,
And joyful back for Gilgal make.
Out of the cave the army brings
The friendly five defeated kings;
Upon their necks the princes tread,
Then by their ſwords they ſoon lie dead:
They hang them up on ſeparate trees,
And their diſgrace the army ſees:
Then in the ſolitary cave
Which they had choſe their lives to ſave,
At night they jointly found a grave.

* The cities which Joſhua took after this ſignal victory, were, Makkedah, Libnah, Lachiſh, Gezer, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir.

HISTORY THE TWENTIETH.

The Reduction of the Northern Coaſt of Canaan: The Dividing the Land: And the Death of Joſhua.

Joſhua, ch. xi. *to the End.*

THE ſouth of Canaan thus ſubdu'd,
And every king that durſt intrude;
The armies dead on every plain,
And the enormous giants ſlain;
A while the conquering armies reſt,
By great JEHOVAH's preſence bleſt.
But ſoon the northern kingdoms roſe,
And ſtrive united to oppoſe
The ſons of Iſrael's rapid courſe,
Which ruſhes with reſiſtleſs force,
And, like the conflagration's blaze,
The land in one vaſt ruin lays.
Great Jabin, Hazor's warlike king,
Seeks all the nations round to bring,

With

With all their armies from afar,
With joint concurrence, to the war.
Each mighty nation that remains,
Or on the mountains or the plains,
Againſt the ſons of Iſrael joins,
And ſoon in dazzling armour ſhines;
While horſemen tread the plains around,
And thundering chariots ſhake the ground.
Jabin ſtood foremoſt in command;
He ſpreads his armies o'er the land;
And ſoon to Merom's wide-ſpread ſtream
With his vaſt hoſt the monarch came.
Then Iſrael's GOD to Joſhua ſaid,
Of all theſe foes be not afraid;
Soon as to-morrow's ſun ſhall ſhine
Attack them, for the victory's thine;
Hamſtring their horſe, their chariots burn,
They march not deſtin'd to return.—
The morning ſhone, the general roſe,
And Iſrael's army with him goes:

With ſudden ſtroke the foe they ſmite,
And put his numerous hoſt to flight.
Then all the plains with ſlaughter ſpread,
And trample on the mighty dead:
With eager ſtroke purſue the blow,
And lay the kings of Canaan low.

Some time the chief at Hazor ſtaid,
And there an eaſy conqueſt made:
The king he ſlew, the city burn'd,
And then to farther conqueſts turn'd.

The race of giants that remain,
By Iſrael's armies now are ſlain;
Torn from their mountains all around,
They fall enormous to the ground:
While grim in death the plains they ſpread
Promiſcuous with the vulgar dead.
The ſtately horſe, the warrior's pride,
And chariots all, the chief deſtroy'd;
Conquer'd the cities that remain,
And rais'd in mighty heaps the ſlain.

As when, by powerful breezes born,
The flames have ſeiz'd a field of corn,
The fires proceed acroſs the lands,
All mortal force in vain withſtands,
Till all the field in ruin lies,
And ſmoaking blazes to the ſkies:
So Joſhua drives from place to place,
And extirpates all Canaan's race.

The war thus o'er the chief proceeds
To recompence each warrior's deeds.
A band is ſent, without delay,
The conquer'd countries to ſurvey:
A council ſits, the tribes appear,
And each his claim advances there:
The general and the prieſts preſide,
And all the lands by lot divide.

Then to the tribes that armed came,
To help their brethren, 'croſs the ſtream
Of ſwelling Jordan, (but whoſe land
Far on the other ſide remain'd)

The general a diſmiſſion gave;
With thanks he ſent them 'croſs the wave,
And counſell'd never to withdraw
From GOD's high worſhip, or his law.
When on the other ſide they came,
In honour of JEHOVAH's name
They rais'd an altar, ſeen to ſtand
On a high jutting point of land,
Conſpicuous from the other ſhore.
The tribes their ſad revolt deplore,
Thinking they had with one accord
Forſook the worſhip of the LORD:
And the aſſembled tribes prepare
Againſt their brethren to make war;
But firſt the prieſt and princes ſent
To know what this ſtrange altar meant.
The tribes reply'd, Theſe ſtones we rear
Not with deſign to worſhip there,
But in memorial to appear

That

That tho' this river, with his tides,
From Iſrael's tribes our land divides,
Yet we in nation are the ſame,
And may the rites of worſhip claim
Where-e'er GOD's tabernacle ſtands.—
This anſwer pleas'd the kindred bands,
Which to the impatient tribes they take,
Who great rejoicings inſtant make;
And to their father's GOD they raiſe
Their grateful hearts in lofty praiſe.
Where Shiloh's ſacred ſtream appear'd
The tabernacle ſoon they rear'd:
GOD's holy altar there they raiſe,
The incenſe burns, the victims blaze;
And all religious rights appear
In their reſpective order there.
Near to the oracle of GOD
Brave Joſhua fix'd his laſt abode,
And had his heritage aſſign'd
In lands that to the altar join'd.

And now the warlike chief appears
Preſs'd with a heavy weight of years;
But ere he bow'd his aged head,
And peaceful join'd the mighty dead,
The tribes he ſummon'd, and thus ſaid:
Ye ſons of Iſrael, all draw near,
Your general's laſt advice to hear:
To you he this laſt warning gives,
And fain would bleſs you while he lives.
You ſaw JEHOVAH's glorious deeds,
And how for you his love proceeds;
What mighty nations he deſtroy'd,
That Iſrael's ſons might be ſupply'd;
To you divided is their land,
And none before you now ſhall ſtand:
If you regard JEHOVAH's law,
And from his precepts ne'er withdraw,
You'll drive the few that lie behind,
Like ſcatter'd chaff before the wind.

But

But if againſt your God you turn,
With heathens join, their worſhip learn,
And to their idols incenſe burn,
No more ſhall e'er by you be ſlain,
But ſoon they will their lands regain;
On every ſide your tribes diſtreſs,
O'erpower, and make your border leſs.
Sure is the caſe! then hear my voice!
And now let wiſdom guide your choice:
Cleave to the Lord with ſteady mind,
And never be to idols join'd:
Remember what your God hath wrought;
Your father Abraham firſt he brought
From idol worſhip, and decreed
All Canaan to his numerous ſeed;
From Egypt's chains he made your way,
Dividing by his power the ſea:
Safe thro' the deſert he hath brought;
He with the kings of Canaan fought;

And by his mighty power you ſtand
Poſſeſſed of the promis'd land.
Be valiant then, and courage take,
And your Deliverer ne'er forſake:
But boldly vindicate his cauſe,
And always keep his righteous laws.
But if 'tis evil in your eyes
To ſerve the GOD that rules the ſkies;
If idols ſtand in your eſteem
More worthy of regard than him;
Chuſe thoſe from which your fathers came,
Beyond Euphrates' rapid ſtream;
Or thoſe whoſe names were long to tell
Serv'd in the land where now you dwell:
But know, while thro' theſe aged veins
Its courſe life's purple current gains,
True to his great commanding word,
I and my houſe will ſerve the LORD.—
Affected with the moving ſtrain,
Silent a while the tribes remain;

Then

Then to the hero each replies,
Juſt are thy thoughts, thy words are wiſe;
True to thy counſel will we ſtand,
And keep JEHOVAH's each command:
Join'd to his altar all our days,
We'll read his law, and learn his ways;
All idol gods ſhall be abhorr'd,
And we will ever ſerve the LORD.—
Then underneath a lofty ſhade
An obeliſk the general made:
Let this a witneſs be, he cries,
If e'er againſt your GOD you riſe.
Or if your wandering ſteps withdraw
From great JEHOVAH and his law.

Soon after this the hoary ſage,
Supreme in honour and in age,
Peaceful and calm reſign'd his breath,
And ſunk into the arms of death.

In his own land the nation gave
The chief an honourable grave:
And by mount Ephraim's ſhaggy ſide,
In rural peace his bones abide.

THE

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

HOLY BIBLE.

BOOK V.

FROM THE

Death of Joſhua, to the Anointing of Saul:

CONTAINING

The Tranſactions of about 400 Years.

THE

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BOOK V.

From the Death of Joshua, to the Anointing of Saul:

CONTAINING

The Transactions of about 400 Years.

HISTORY THE FIRST.

The Succeſs of the Tribes of Judah and Simeon; and the Reduction of Hebron and Debir, by Caleb.

Judges, ch. i.

NOW Iſrael's warlike chief being dead,
And all their tribes o'er Canaan ſpread;
Of various nations late expell'd,
Broken and routed in the field,
The few that ſav'd their lives by flight,
In various places ſoon unite,
And their loſt cities, and their plains,
A party here and there regains:
Theſe with the tribes of Iſrael dwell;
And their firſt care is to expel.
To Shiloh Iſrael's ſons repair,
And aſk JEHOVAH's counſel there,
Which of their tribes ſhall foremoſt go
Againſt the ſtill remaining foe.

To Judah's tribe it is decreed
First in this buſineſs to proceed:
And as brave Simeon's ſons had gain'd
The coaſt adjoining to his land,
Jointly the brother tribes repair,
Elate, and eager for the war.
To Bezek firſt they take their way,
And in the town ten thouſand ſlay:
The monarch left his army dead,
And from the conquering ſquadrons fled;
But no advantage thence aroſe,
Purſu'd and taken by his foes:
His thumbs, and his great toes beſide,
From his four limbs their ſwords divide.
Stung with the pain, and the diſgrace,
He thus addreſs'd the victor race:
Ye ſons of Iſrael, now you ſee
A juſt example made of me:
Full threeſcore kings, their armies ſlain,
Have groan'd beneath my captive chain;

All

All theſe I maim'd in equal ſort,
And made their miſery my ſport;
Like dogs I us'd them, and each day
They eat the bread I threw away:
Now the great Ruler of the Sky
Beholds me with reproachful eye;
With pain and ſorrow fills my days,
And all my cruelty repays.—
Thus mourn'd the king his former pride,
And near the walls of Salem dy'd.

With ſhouts the victor hoſt proceeds,
And marks its way with mighty deeds;
Before them various nations bleed,
And to their cities they ſucceed.
The ſons of Joſeph likewiſe roſe
Mighty in war againſt their foes.
Bethel their force withſtood in vain;
Their townſmen and their warriors ſlain
They leave their city and their land
Both to the conquering hoſt's command.

This pious tribe in Shechem's plains
Interr'd their father's dear remains:
From Egypt brought, they in an urn
To his own country safe return,
As Joseph his desire expreſt,
And now his bones in Canaan reſt.

When warlike Joshua's conquering hand
Subdu'd great Hebron's giant band,
This city was to Caleb given;
Such was the will of righteous heaven:
For when the spies from Hebron fled,
The youth remain'd untouch'd with dread;
And urg'd the armies to go there,
When all the nation shook with fear;
And to reward his noble mind
This giant city was assign'd:
But tho' the chief was strong and bold,
He could not long his conqueſt hold:
For when the wars no longer burn,
Three sons of Anak there return,

And

And in their native city dwell;
Them ſoon the warlike tribes expel,
With noble Caleb at their head,
And lay the three huge giants dead.

To Debir turns the conquering train:
When to the armies on the plain
The hoary chief exulting ſpake:
The valiant youth who firſt ſhall make
His entrance good within the town,
And beat each bold oppoſer down,
Near to myſelf ſhall be ally'd,
And beauteous Achſah be his bride.—
The ſon of Kenaz joyful heard,
And in his uncle's cauſe appear'd:
By him the town ſubjected lies,
And ſoon he gains the lovely prize.
But when at firſt the willing dame
To meet her blooming hero came,
She thought his proweſs ill repaid,
And to her ſire petition made

To ſubject to her lord's command
A further portion of his land.
The chief conſents; and ſoon beſtow'd
Green fields, where water ſtreaming flow'd
From chryſtal ſprings, whoſe ſilver tide
The cattle and the ſwains ſupply'd.

HISTORY THE SECOND.

The Revolt of the Iſraelites, after the Death of Joſhua: They are reproved by an Angel; but returning again to Idolatry, are diſtreſſed by the neighbouring Princes; and relieved by Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar.

Judges, ch. ii. iii.

NOW number'd with the ſilent dead
Lies each brave chief who terror ſpread
Thro' Canaan's cities, and her kings;
And a young generation ſprings

That

That knew not GOD, or had been taught
The wonders he for Iſrael wrought.
Theſe, while their fathers liv'd, abode
True to the worſhip of their GOD:
But when the elders heads were laid,
Into the paths of error ſtray'd;
Contrary to the LORD's command,
Mix'd with the daughters of the land,
And, by their crafty wiles enſnar'd,
For all pollution were prepar'd.
At every idol ſhrine they now,
With vile abaſement, proſtrate bow;
In each unhallow'd rite partake,
And Shiloh's ſacred ſtream forſake;
In idol groves to Baal bend,
And all his impious feaſts attend;
To Aſhtaroth in worſhip join,
And pour in ſtreams the ruddy wine.
From his high throne the LORD ſurveys
Their foul revolt, and all their ways;

Their arms he will no longer bleſs,
Or crown their warriors with ſucceſs;
Tho' Canaan's natives ſtill remain'd
Promiſcuous blended in the land,
Their troops no more can Iſrael rout,
Or have they ſtrength to drive them out.
Then from the ſummit of the ſkies
An Heavenly Form to Gilgal flies;
From thence at Bochim ſoon appear'd,
And thus his awful voice was heard:
From haughty Egypt's impious land
I brought you forth, with powerful hand;
And your twelve tribes amongſt them ſhare
The land I to your fathers ſware.
To you my covenant always ſtood,
To bleſs you, and to do you good,
While you regard my holy will,
And all my righteous laws fulfil.
Remember then 'twas my command
When you poſſeſs'd the promis'd land

You

You ſhould to all my ways incline,
And with the natives never join;
But them and all their idols ſcorn,
Cut down their groves, their ſtatues burn,
And all their worſhip overturn:
But from my counſel you withdraw,
And ſtand reluctant to my law;
The idols of the land allow,
And to the gods of Canaan bow.
For this your armies quit the field,
Nor make the friends of idols yield:
Boldly amongſt you ſtill they dwell,
And you unable to expel:
Their gods, and their alluring fair,
Remain your curſe, and conſtant ſnare,
And ſhall remain.—The nation hears,
And copious ſtreaming flow their tears;
As ſprings from ſome high rock's tall head
Their ſilent trickling waters ſhed.

They

They to their fathers God return,
And victims on his altar burn:
But soon forget his lofty praise,
Fond of their former evil ways;
In peace with Baal's votaries live,
And to his priests their daughters give;
Ally'd to every nation stand,
And with such mixtures fill the land.

In wrath the God of Israel saw
The stupid tribes forsake his law,
And, by distress and hardship join'd,
To bring them to a better mind,
Stirr'd up great Cushan, Syria's king,
O'er great Euphrates' stream to bring
His potent armies to the field.
To them the tribes of Israel yield:
Eight tedious years they wore his chain,
And then in grief to God complain.

The Lord attends when Israel cries,
And makes a great deliverer rise;

Brave

Brave Othniel, late in war renown'd,
And with unfading laurels crown'd:
His ſoul the LORD of Hoſts inſpires,
And fills his heart with martial fires:
Againſt the tyrant king he goes,
And him in battle overthrows.
All Iſrael then he rul'd and bleſt,
And forty years the land had reſt.

Again the tribes forſake their GOD,
And fall by his chaſtiſing rod.
For brawny Eglon, Moab's king,
Againſt them ſoon preſumes to bring
Ammon, and Amalek, to ſhare
The honours and the toils of war:
The friendly hoſts with ſhouts unite,
And all the ſons of Iſrael ſmite
That dwelt in Gilead; then with ſpeed
They croſs'd great Jordan, and decreed
The ten remaining tribes to bleed.

On

On Jordan's banks then burns the war,
And Iſrael's hoſt, retreating far,
Leave all the plains and ſpacious wood
Where Jericho ſo lately ſtood,
In the poſſeſſion of the foe.
Diſmay'd and broken by the blow,
Full eighteen years the tribes remain
Subjected to the victor's chain.
Oppreſſive bondage makes them groan,
And ſupplicate JEHOVAH's throne:
Their GOD in tender pity heard,
And a deliverer ſoon appear'd.
Brave Ehud takes the firſt command,
And ſtands the judge of all the land.
From Benjamin the hero roſe,
And with left hand his javelin throws.
By him, with ſervants to attend,
The ſervile tribes propos'd to ſend
Their tribute to the victor king.
But ere the weighty charge they bring,

The Lord inſpires a bold deſign,
In which he ſuffers none to join
With valiant Ehud. Soon he made
A ſmall ſhort ſword, and hid the blade
Under his garment, when he went
The annual tribute to preſent
To haughty Eglon, who remain'd
Still in the land which late he gain'd.
The preſent made, without delay
The chief his ſervants ſent away:
Himſelf returns; and ſoon declares
That he a private meſſage bears
To Moab's king. With diſtant awe
The attending ſervants ſoon withdraw;
Then the unwieldy monarch roſe,
When to the king the hero goes,
And, eager in his country's cauſe,
With his left hand the dagger draws.
The God of Iſrael, ſerv'd by us,
Speaks to thee, prince, in anger, thus!

Bold Ehud cries;—and, at the word,
Deep in his bowels plung'd the ſword:
The fat upon the weapon clos'd;
The hero fled, for none oppos'd;
Secure he lock'd the room of ſtate,
And left the monarch to his fate.

Then to mount Ephraim he withdrew,
And the loud martial trumpet blew.
The tribes, encourag'd at the ſound,
With haſty ſteps ſoon gather round;
And while they crowd the mountain ſide,
Exulting thus the hero cry'd:
Come follow me, my brethren all,
And by our arms ſhall Moab fall:
In Eglon's bowels lies my ſword;
Rouſe up! the work is from the LORD.—
Fir'd by the ſound to noble deeds,
Each eager tribe to war proceeds:
But firſt, to make the victory ſure,
The fords of Jordan they ſecure;

And having cut off their retreat,
The Moabites they ſoon defeat:
Ten thouſand fall; nor one remains
To croſs the ſtream to Moab's plains.
Mean-while the ſervants of the ſtate
Upon their monarch go to wait:
But, as the doors are faſt, ſurmiſe
He in his chamber ſleeping lies.
To take his reſt long time they gave,
But all was ſilent as the grave;
No king returns. The door they force,
Great Eglon lies a breathleſs corſe:
Chill horror ſeizes all the land,
And Iſrael's ſons their freedom gain'd;
Mad tumult and confuſion ceaſe,
And eighty years they dwelt in peace.
Next from the plough great Shamgar roſe
Mighty to cruſh his country's foes,
And of bold robbers clear'd the road,
With his ſharp-pointed ox's goad:

Six hundred fell by his ſtrong hand,
And of the crew he clear'd the land.

HISTORY THE THIRD.

Of Deborah and Barak; Jael and Siſera.

Judges, ch. v. vi.

BUT Iſrael's tribes in proſperous days
Forgot their great Deliverer's praiſe,
Forſake his worſhip and his law,
And from his high commands withdraw;
This makes JEHOVAH's anger burn,
And wars and troubles ſoon return.
Great Jabin, * Hazor's king, conſtrains
All Iſrael's tribes to wear his chains.
Great was this prince renown'd in war,
For the proud ſteed and thundering car:

Nine

* There was a king of this name ſlain in the wars of Joſhua, and a city named Hazor plundered and burnt. It is ſuppoſed that city had been rebuilt, and that Jabin was a deſcendant of the former king.

Nine hundred iron chariots ſtand
Arm'd with ſharp ſcythes at his command:
And where the rage of battle calls
Great Siſera * like a tempeſt falls.
This dreadful force all Iſrael fears,
And bears the burden twenty years.

Oppreſs'd, dejected, and diſmay'd,
The tribes implore JEHOVAH's aid;
With prayers and tears they ſeek the ſkies,
And GOD in pity hears their cries.

Beneath a lofty pine-tree's ſhade,
Cloſe by mount Ephraim, undiſmay'd,
A matron dwelt, of ancient fame,
To whom the tribes for judgment came,
A propheteſs, and Deborah nam'd,
Thro' all the land of Iſrael fam'd:
To her in viſion GOD explain'd
By whom he choſe to ſave the land.

For

* The general of Jabin's armies.

For Barak ſhe to Kadeſh ſent,
And thus declar'd the great intent:
The God of Iſrael hath thee choſe
As a deliverer from their foes:
To thee the victory is decreed;
To Tabor's mountain go with ſpeed:
Of Naphtali aſſemble there
Ten thouſand warriors. Void of fear,
To Kiſhon's ſtream then take thy way;
And there in arms thou ſhalt ſurvey
The mighty hoſt of Jabin led,
With haughty Siſera at their head;
His iron chariots and his ſteeds,
Rang'd in long ranks, for horrid deeds:
But by thine arms they there ſhall fall,
And one vaſt ſlaughter ſwallow all.—
The arduous taſk I muſt forbear,
Except thou wilt attend them there:
Barak replies.—To which the dame:
I ſurely go; but yet thy fame

By

By this exploit not much ſhall riſe;
For by a woman Siſera dies.—
Then to mount Tabor Barak goes,
And there the martial trumpet blows;
Ten thouſand men the ſummit gain,
On which extends a ſpacious plain;
And truſting in JEHOVAH's care,
Exulting wait the coming war.
Of their aſſembling Siſera heard,
And ſoon at Kiſhon's ſtreams appear'd,
With an enormous warlike force
Of iron chariots, and of horſe:
His thundering cars terrific ſound,
And armies cover all the ground;
Their helmets flaſh, their banners blaze,
Which Barak from the mount ſurveys.
The propheteſs with tranſport cries,
The day is come! Up, Barak, riſe!
For by thine hand this army dies.

Does not the LORD before thee go!
Bear down with courage on the foe.—
Then like a torrent ruſhing down
High foaming from the mountain's crown,
That roars and thunders 'croſs the plain,
And drives impetuous to the main,
Great Barak from vaſt Tabor's height
Pours on the warlike Canaanite;
With force reſiſtleſs onſet makes,
And each bold warrior's courage ſhakes.
The chariots in diſorder fly,
And ſoon in broken fragments lie:
Hot burns the war, the mighty fall,
And mad confuſion ſeizes all.

Thus while the ſword wide-waſting reigns,
And rages o'er the purple plains,
O'er broken wheels, and heaps of dead,
On foot the vanquiſh'd general fled.
Heber the Kenite's tents he gaind,
With whom his king in peace remain'd;

Jael,

Jael, his friend's fair ſpouſe, he ſaw,
Who kindly begg'd him to withdraw
And hide himſelf within her tent;
To which the general gave conſent.
He aſks to drink: She milk ſupplies;
And in her tent to reſt he lies.
Then a bold thought inſpir'd her mind,
Which ſeems too great for woman-kind:
For while he ſlept, the crafty dame
With a large ſpike in ſilence came,
Which driving hard, without diſmay,
As on his ſide the warrior lay,
A courſe ſtraight thro' his temples ſound,
And inſtant nail'd him to the ground.
Soon Barak in purſuit ſhe ſpies,
To whom the dame exulting cries,
Come in, great warrior, here, and view
The only man that you purſue.—
Barak went in, and wondering found
The noble Siſera on the ground

Breathleſs, and weltering in his gore,
Which in wide ſtreams o'erſpread the floor.
Then on the king his arms he turn'd,
And all the rage of battle burn'd,
Till Jabin's hoſt was all deſtroy'd;
And with his men the monarch dy'd.

Then Deborah and Barak ſang,
And with high ſtrains the mountains rang:
The joyful armies join the ſound,
And great JEHOVAH's deeds reſound,
Rais'd by ten thouſand grateful tongues;
And lofty praiſe the day prolongs.

HISTORY THE FOURTH.

Gideon delivers Iſrael from the Oppreſſion of the Midianites.

Judges, ch. vi. vii.

WHILE Barak held the firſt command,
And pious Deborah judg'd the land,
The highly-favour'd tribes abode
True to the worſhip of their GOD:
But when theſe worthies were no more,
As Iſrael oft had done before,
They ſoon to idol worſhip turn,
Which makes JEHOVAH's anger burn.
Full forty years the land had reſt:
But when the ſtupid tribes tranſgreſt,
Proud Amalek and Midian roſe,
Both nations Iſrael's mortal foes;
And now their armies crowd the plain,
In vengeance for their fathers ſlain,

Like ſwarms of locuſts they abound,
Whoſe armies cover all the ground;
And, numerous as the grains of ſand,
Deſtroy and eat up all the land.

Their corn and cattle thus deſtroy'd,
In dens and caves now Iſrael hide,
To ſhun the ſword's ſharp point; and all
Into the depth of miſery fall.

In this diſtreſs they rais'd their eyes
To where the Help of Iſrael lies,
JEHOVAH's power ſo often try'd,
Their Great Deliverer and their Guide.
The LORD regards; but firſt, in love,
He ſends his prophet to reprove
The ſtupid nation. From the ſeer
Theſe awful words the people hear:
The GOD of Iſrael, whoſe ſtrong hand
Hath brought you to the promis'd land;
Who firſt from Egypt's bondage brought,
And ſigns and wonders for you wrought;

Demands

Demands the reaſon why your race
To idol-worſhip thus give place?
Why Canaan's gods your favour gain?
And every warning is in vain.—
Then, ſwift deſcending from the ſkies,
An heavenly form to Ophrah flies;
And ſits a while to view diſplay'd
Beneath an oak's wide-ſpreading ſhade,
A chief of Abiezer's race,
Joaſh by name, then own'd the place;
Whoſe ſon, brave Gideon, was employ'd
In threſhing wheat; and thought to hide
From Midian's bands the yellow grain,
Which might his father's houſe ſuſtain:
While this his care the hero made,
To him the angel came, and ſaid:
Thou mighty man of valour, riſe!
In thee the hope of Iſrael lies;
The LORD is with thee.—Soon replies

The

The noble youth, If this be ſo,
Why is our nation brought ſo low?
Where is the GOD that made our way
From Egypt's bondage thro' the ſea?
For us divided Jordan's wave,
And went before us ſtrong to ſave!
Now Midian's hoſts againſt us riſe,
And low in duſt his Iſrael lies.—
The heavenly form ſtill brighter ſhin'd,
Smil'd on the chief, and thus rejoin'd:
Go in thy might! thou ſhalt ſucceed,
By thee ſhall Iſrael's ſons be freed;
Of theſe vaſt armies rid the land;
Go in thy might! 'tis I command.—
Alas, my lord! the youth replies,
To one more noble turn thine eyes!
My father's houſe is low and mean,
And I the leaſt of all the train.—
Thou art the man! It is decreed
The mighty by thine arm ſhall bleed:

I am thy guide, riſe at my call!
And as one man ſhall Midian fall.—
So ſpake the LORD. The youth rejoins,
While heavenly glory round him ſhines,
Give me ſome ſign that I may know
That thou wilt furely with me go:
Depart not hence till I return,
And who talks with me let me learn.—
Gideon in haſte a kid prepares,
And in his hand the offering bears.
Lay down the fleſh, the angel cry'd,
Upon the rock; the cakes beſide.—
The youth obeys; when with a wand
Apparent in the angel's hand,
He touch'd the kid. At once a flame,
Which out of the hard marble came,
Conſumes the offering as it lies:
And out of ſight the angel flies.
The youth his former guilt deplor'd,
And built an altar to the LORD

On the hard rock, with heart ſincere,
And worſhipp'd great JEHOVAH there.
Now ſable night had veil'd the ſkies,
And when to reſt young Gideon lies
A viſion ſhone around his bed,
And to the ſlumbering hero ſaid:
And canſt thou, Gideon, ſleeping lie,
When Baal's ſtatue ſtands ſo nigh!
Ariſe! and caſt the idol down;
Cut down his grove; and on the crown
Of yon tall rock an altar raiſe,
And let to me, ere morning, blaze
The ſecond bullock ſeven years old:
Ariſe! and do as I have told.—
With heart elate the youth aroſe,
Then to the ſenſeleſs idol goes,
And down the impious ſtatue throws.
With ten ſtout ſervants in his train,
The ſummit of the rock they gain;

The

The grove cut down, an altar rear,
And ſacrifice the bullock there.

The townſmen ſoon the ruin ſpy,
And doom the noble youth to die.
To which his father made reply:
Let Baal riſe himſelf, and plead
Againſt the man that fell'd his ſhade.
Is he a god, and can he ſtand,
When wrong'd, in need of mortal hand?

On Jezreel's wide delightful plains
The Midianitiſh hoſt remains.
Their tents along the valley ſtand;
And parties march to ſpoil the land.
But Gideon's ſoul the LORD inſpires,
And fills his breaſt with noble fires,
When in his bleeding country's cauſe
His righteous ſword the hero draws.
Then at his trumpet's martial ſound
All Abiezer-gathers round.

Thro' Zebulun and Naphtali
With eager haſte his ſervants fly;
And glad to favour his deſign,
The willing tribes his ſtandard join.
Gideon two ſigns of GOD requires,
And both ſucceeds as he deſires:
Then with his troops elate he goes,
And forms his camp beſide his foes.
Thus to the general ſpake the LORD:
That Iſrael may regard my word
Thou ſhalt this mighty hoſt ſubdue,
Not by great numbers, but by few,
Leſt Jacob's ſons ſhould vaunting brave
That their own arm has power to ſave.
Throughout the army then proclaim,
That each return from whence he came
Who comes with cold reluctance here,
Or in his ſpirit yields to fear.—
Gideon proclaim'd as GOD requir'd,
And twenty thouſand ſoon retir'd.

Ten

Ten thouſand warriors ſtill remain
Forward and fearleſs on the plain.
Too great remains the number ſtill:
The LORD then adds, It is my will
To work deliverance by ſo few,
That all the tribes my hand may view.
Conduct them to the river's brink,
And let the whole ten thouſand drink:
Set by themſelves the men that ſtand,
And take up water with their hand:
Thoſe that kneel down to meet the ſtream,
And with their lips draw in the ſame,
Let ſtand apart,—The hero brought
His army, as the LORD had taught.
Three hundred only hand the wave:
By theſe the LORD will Iſrael ſave;
Theſe in his camp the chief retains,
The reſt regain their tents and plains.
When night's deep ſhade had veil'd the ſky,
Bold Gideon went the foe to ſpy,

And heard a ſoldier tell his dream,
Which fill'd his ſoul with martial flame;
Then orders to his troops he gave,
That like himſelf they ſhould behave.
Each takes a trumpet in his hand,
And in the night awaits command:
Each with a pitcher is ſupply'd,
Deſign'd a flaming torch to hide.
The dauntleſs hero leads the way,
And tells his followers what to ſay:
Into three companies divides
The number that with him abides;
Bids them each man his trumpet ſound,
And ſhake the trembling camp around,
Then the ſame moment ſhout, The ſword
Of Gideon and of the LORD.

Now midnight reign'd in awful ſhade,
When, truſting in JEHOVAH's aid,
Thro' the ſtill night acroſs the plain
In ſilence march the warrior train.

Three

Three companies their troop compoſe:
The general in the middle goes;
Soon as they reach the adverſe lines,
His trumpet to his mouth he joins,
Then breaks his pitcher on the ground;
The ſame do all his followers round:
The trumpets roar, the torches blaze,
The armies ſcream in wild amaze;
While Iſrael's troop loud ſhouts, The ſword
Of Gideon and of the LORD.—
Confus'd, affrighted and diſmay'd,
Midian's long ranks plunge thro' the ſhade
Of midnight; urg'd by headlong fear,
Wandering they run, they know not where;
And in ſurprize and terror know
Not their own armies from the foe:
By their own ſwords the nations fall,
And death and darkneſs ſwallow all.
Soon as the morn reſtor'd the day,
The thirty thouſand ſent away

Alike

Alike with martial fury burn,
And ſhouting to the field return.
The neighbouring tribes the victory view,
And join to plunder and purſue.
Midian's two princes and her kings
Alike to duſt the victor brings:
The foe in one vaſt ruin lays,
And governs Iſrael all his days.

HISTORY THE FIFTH.

The Exploits of Abimelech.

Judges, ch. ix.

THE Midianites being thus ſubdu'd,
The tribes with thanks great Gideon view'd,
And their united offers bring
To make their noble general king:
And all with one conſent combine
To fix the kingdom in his line.

The

The worthy chief refus'd the crown;
But aſks the armies to lay down
The golden ear-rings late their prey:
The willing tribes his word obey.
The proffer'd gold the hero takes,
Of this a coſtly ephod makes;
Which to his houſe becomes a ſnare,
And brings the tribes to worſhip there.
Full forty years he judg'd the land,
And Iſrael's ſons in peace remain'd.
His houſhold ſeventy ſons contains,
And all his people's love he gains:
Then in a good old age he dy'd,
And his own land a grave ſupply'd.
Soon as the hero's death was mourn'd,
Iſrael again to Baal turn'd,
Regardleſs of JEHOVAH's praiſe
While peace and plenty crown'd their days:
Nor did their generous love proceed
In kindneſs to great Gideon's ſeed.

To recompence them as they ought,
Conſidering how their father fought.
Of all great Gideon's numerous race
One of an handmaid born took place;
Abimelech the traitor's name.
To Shechem, whence his mother came,
After his father's death he went,
And there explain'd his baſe intent
To extirpate all Gideon's ſeed.
To this the citizens agreed;
And then Abimelech to bring,
And make the bloody miſcreant king,
Large ſums of ſilver they ſupply,
Which in their idol's temple lie.
Abimelech, by hell inſpir'd,
With this a band of ruffians hir'd:
With theſe to Ophrah goes with ſpeed,
And on one ſtone his brethren bleed:
The worthy ſeventy he deſtroy'd;
Deſerving better fate they dy'd.

Thea

Then back to Shechem he proceeds,
And glories in his bloody deeds.
The Shechemites the work approv'd;
And now his brethren were remov'd,
The impious murderer they bring,
And with loud shouts proclaim him king.

But Jotham, Gideon's youngest son,
From the dire massacre had run,
And 'scap'd the slaughter. While the town
With festive joy the traitor crown,
On Gerizzim's high rock he stands,
And their attention thus demands:
Ye men of Shechem, hear my strain,
Nor let my warning prove in vain;
Let every ear my words pursue,
That God may hearken unto you.
The trees went forth a certain day
To make a king. They all survey
The olive's beauteous green display'd,
And ask the tree to rule the shade.

The olive a denial gave,
Nor would his oily fatneſs leave.
The fig-tree on the mountain ſide
They next invite; but this deny'd;
Nor would he leave, at ſuch a ſuit,
His ſweetneſs and his noble fruit.
Thus twice repuls'd, the trees incline
Next to exalt the noble vine.
The vine well knew the conſtant uſe
Of generous wine's all-chearing juice;
Nor honour or advantage ſees
To be promoted o'er the trees.
But ſtill the groves their aim purſue,
And next the buſhy bramble view;
And ſoon the ſhrubs their offer bring
To make the low-twigg'd thorn their king.
The bramble ſhook each thorny ſide,
And to the trees exulting cry'd,
If me you raiſe to regal ſway,
Be careful! and my laws obey;

Or I with fire will on you turn,
And every lofty cedar burn.
Ye men of Shechem, hear my voice,
The bramble you have made your choice;
For you my noble father fought,
And hath a great deliverance wrought;
He every honour ſoon laid down,
Nor would accept your offer'd crown:
But what returns our houſhold gain!
His ſeventy ſons your hands have ſlain:
To one baſe-born your crown you bring,
And make a murderer your king.
If you have acted juſt and right,
And well my father's houſe requite;
If you have been ſincere and true,
Joy in your king, and he in you.
But if your deeds have been perverſe,
Then may you prove each other's curſe;
May fire and fury on you turn,
And each in rage the other burn.—

So ſpake the youth; then fled to Beer,
And dwelt in peace and ſafety there.
Three years Abimelech remain'd,
And proſperous in Shechem reign'd,
When down from unpropitious ſkies
The avenging power of diſcord flies;
And heaven in righteous wrath proceeds
To recompence his former deeds.
Contention ſoon in Shechem roſe;
Abimelech to diſtance goes:
With growing wrath the townſmen burn,
And ſeek to hinder his return.
They Gaal for their leader take,
And ſtout reſiſtance mean to make.
In rage Abimelech deſcends,
And all his force againſt them bends;
Deſtroys their leader and their town,
And beats in crowds the natives down:
The ſword's ſharp point he on them turns,
And all the rage of ſlaughter burns.

The frighted tribes the town forſake,
And in the temple ſhelter take,
Where Baal's ſtatue ſtood on high,
To which they now for ſuccour fly.
Then to mount Zalmon goes the king,
And after him his followers ſpring;
An ax he takes, a bough cuts down,
From the high mountain's ſhaggy crown;
His heralds thro' the hoſt proclaim,
That all his army do the ſame:
To Shechem they in rage return,
And there the idol-temple burn;
And every one that there retires
Is choak'd with ſuffocating fires.
To Thebez next the war proceeds,
And marks the way with dreadful deeds:
The town is ſtorm'd, the townſmen fall;
In vain on Baal now they call.
Within the walls is ſeen to riſe,
In ſtately height toward the ſkies,

A large

A large ſtrong tower; and, urg'd by fear,
Great numbers run and ſhelter there.
The raging king, with riſing ire,
Proceeds to ſet the door on fire;
When from the top, in open view,
Part of a rock a woman threw,
Which with avenging force deſcends;
Beneath the ſtroke the tyrant bends:
Full on his forehead drives the ſtone;
It rent the ſkin, and cruſh'd the bone;
Then ſtaggering ſoon the monarch falls,
And to his armour-bearer calls:
Haſte! bring thy ſword at my command,
Fear not; diſpatch me out of hand;
That after-times may never tell
That by a woman's hand I fell.—
The ſervant takes him at his word,
And thro' his body thruſt his ſword.

Engraved for Fellows's History of the Bible.

Jephthah meeting his Daughter.

HISTORY THE SIXTH.

Of Jephthah and his Vow.

Judges, ch. xi. xii.

THO' when great Gideon was no more,
As Iſrael oft had done before,
To idol-worſhip they return,
And incenſe to dumb Baal burn:
The LORD, tho' much their crimes provoke,
In pity ſtays the avenging ſtroke.
Twice twenty years their peace remain'd;
(Tola and Jair judg'd the land,)
But while the LORD his wrath delays,
They grow more bold in evil ways,
And ſerve with zeal which knows no bound
The gods of all the nations round.
At Baal's, Belus, Saturn's ſhrine,
In impious rites and vows they join;

To

To Molech are their children ſlain;
At Aſhtaroth and Aſtrate's fane
They large drink-offerings pour; and now
To Beelzebub and Dagon bow.
No longer wrath reluctant lies,
Or ſleeps the vengeance of the ſkies:
By God inſpir'd, fierce rancour runs
Thro' Philiſtine and Ammon's ſons;
They with united order join,
In Gilead their armies ſhine,
And all the lands they ſoon inſlave
Beyond great Jordan's ſwelling wave.
Twice nine long years they held the chain,
Then croſs the ſtream, and ſeek to gain
Rich Canaan's mountains, and her vales:
And long their hoſtile force prevails.
Diſtreſs'd, diſcourag'd and diſmay'd,
The tribes implore Jehovah's aid;
Who anſwers them as they deſerve,
And bids them ſeek the gods they ſerve.

In

In deep diſtreſs, with prayers and tears,
The humbled nation now appears
Before God's altar, and implore
That he will plead their cauſe once more.
The Lord, attentive to their cries,
Soon makes a new deliverer riſe.
Obſcurely great, in Gilead's plains
A mighty man of war remains;
But him his brethren treat with ſcorn,
As being of an handmaid born:
Jephthah his name; and, in diſtreſs,
They ſeek his valour to redreſs
Their preſent wrongs. If he ſucceed,
To future ſway he is decreed.
Their ſuit he views with gentle blame,
As in diſtreſs to him they came,
Whom oft before they had deſpis'd;
But urg'd, conſents. Much is he priz'd;
To him for aid they turn their eyes,
And ſoon in arms around him riſe.

The chief, before he ſtrikes a blow,
Of Ammon's king deſires to know
On what pretence on Iſrael's plains
His hoſtile troops ſo long remains.
Ammon replies, with ſtern demand,
That to his crown belongs the land
From diſtant Arnon's winding ſhore
To where the waves of Jordan roar.
Jephthah aſſerts, that all the ground,
The plains and the rich vallies round,
By Iſrael's God to her were given,
(The Lord ſupreme of earth and heaven)
And have been held, as it appears,
The ſpace of full three hundred years:
And, ſince they ne'er were claim'd before,
To Ammon they return no more:
But as his claim muſt be deny'd,
The quarrel let the ſword decide.
The hero then the Lord inſpires,
And fills his ſoul with martial fires:

In

In ſhining arms himſelf he dreſt,
And with bold words excites the reſt.
They march, depending on his might,
And when the foe appear'd in ſight,
With hands uplifted to the ſkies,
Heard by his hoſt, the general cries:
Great God of Iſrael! whoſe ſtrong hand
Gave us poſſeſſion of this land,
With warlike force inſpire us all,
And by our arms let Ammon fall:
So on thine altar will I burn
Whate'er comes forth, at my return,
From my glad houſe, with ſongs of peace
To hail me, when the war ſhall ceaſe.—
Thus vow'd the chief; and on the foe
With fury drives. Beneath the blow
The broken troops of Ammon reel,
And fall by the avenging ſteel.
The conquering army ſoon proceeds;
And marks its way with mighty deeds.

Through twenty cities burns the war;
And Ammon's ſons, retreating far,
To the victorious general yield
The full poſſeſſion of the field;
Who all the land from Arnon gains
To Minneth's ever-fruitful plains:
Nor dare their broken troops intrude
Throughout the lands his ſword ſubdu'd.
Then back in triumph goes the chief;
But ſoon his joy is turn'd to grief.
His only daughter, with a quire
Of maidens, comes to meet her ſire:
The joyful train with timbrels goes,
And ſings his victory o'er his foes.
Pale horror ſhook the chief, who now,
Too late, repents his thoughtleſs vow.
Alas, my daughter! doſt thou know
That war's firſt honours are my woe?
Depriv'd of thee, ah, hapleſs maid!
Upon my brows the laurels fade;

For I to Iſrael's God have vow'd,
And can't recal.—So ſpake aloud
The trembling chief. To which the fair:
Father on me beſtow no care;
Whate'er thy lips to God have ſaid
Reſpecting me, ſhall be obey'd.
The Lord hath heard, with joy I learn,
The vows I made for thy return;
Hath by thine arm ſubdu'd the foe,
And laid the ſons of Ammon low.
It is enough: But hear my prayer!
For two full months thy daughter ſpare,
While with my virgin train I go,
And on the mountains wail my woe;
Then every hill, and every vale,
Shall liſten to the mournful tale.—
He granted what his child requir'd;
The virgin two full months retir'd;
Then to his houſe return'd the maid;
To her he did as he had ſaid.

The Iſraelitiſh maids appear
In ſoft aſſemblage every year;
Four days their mournful ſongs relate
The lovely damſel's hapleſs fate.*

* Commentators are very much divided in their opinions, concerning what it was which this lady ſuffered. It was thought by Joſephus, and ſeveral of the Jewiſh writers, that ſhe was really put to death; and the ſame notion was entertained by many Chriſtians alſo. But ſome of the ancients, and ſeveral modern authors of the firſt note, conclude, that ſhe was only dedicated to the ſervice of GOD, and obliged to live a ſingle life.

HISTORY THE SEVENTH.

The Exploits and Death of Samſon.

Judges, ch. xiii. xiv. xv. xvi.

WHEN mighty Jephthah glorious came
Back to great Jordan's ſacred ſtream,
The Ephraimites againſt him roſe,
Becauſe he conquer'd Iſrael's foes
Without ſoliciting their aid.
The like complaint before they made
To proſperous Gideon, who reply'd
In ſuch ſmooth terms as pacify'd.
But Jephthah's anſwer they retort
With foul reproach; in warlike ſort
His men, offended at their tongues,
By dint of ſword avenge their wrongs.
By theſe the men of Ephraim bleed:
The victors then in haſte proceed,

And

And Jordan's paſſages they take,
To keep their foes from coming back:
For they to war had croſs'd the tide,
Their country on the other ſide.
There as their ſtraggling parties roam,
As they endeavour'd to get home,
The folly of their war they learn;
And forty thouſand ne'er return.

Six years great Jephthah judg'd the land,
And after him to firſt command
Bold Ibzan, Elon, Abdon roſe
In order, ſtrong to cruſh the foes
Of Iſrael; and the train appears
In ſhort ſucceſſion twenty years.
But when theſe heroes heads were laid,
The people from JEHOVAH ſtray'd;
Again to idols turn their eyes,
And rouſe the vengeance of the ſkies.

Then, as their baſe revolts deſerve,
The haughty Philiſtines they ſerve;

And forty years their lords conſtrain
The ſervile tribes to wear their chain:
When, cloath'd in more than mortal might,
Great Samſon roſe, renown'd in fight;
All Iſrael's glory, and their boaſt;
Himſelf a bulwark, and an hoſt.
From Zorah came the mighty man,
And of the family of Dan.
An angel had foretold his birth,
And future greatneſs in the earth:
His parents heard with growing joy,
And by his order nurs'd the boy.
To manhood ſoon the youth aroſe,
And great exploits of ſtrength he ſhews,
At Eſhtaol's camp, in his own land,
While all the armies wondering ſtand.
A damſel of Philiſtine race
In the young hero's heart found place:
At Timnah dwelt the enchanting fair;
They celebrate the nuptials there.

Thirty choice youths their friends invite
With them to ſhare the feſtive rite:
The choſen train with ſpeed attends,
Preſented as the bridegroom's friends.
To theſe a riddle he propos'd,
And if their ſkill the truth expos'd
To each a ſuit of clothes he'd give;
Or elſe of each the ſame receive,
If all the ſeven days of the feaſt
They at the meaning vainly gueſs'd.
A lion he had lately ſlain,
Which roar'd againſt him on the plain:
With his bare arm his heart he found,
And left the carcaſe on the ground.
A ſwarm of bees, in waxen cells,
Soon after in the carcaſe dwells:
The juicy combs he makes his prize,
And eats the honey as it lies.
This ſtrange event, in dubious phraſe,
The riddle he propounds diſplays.

Six

Six days unite the feſtive train
To find the meaning; but in vain:
The ſeventh, with threats his wife they ply;
The ſecret ſhe muſt gain or die.
This with intreaties ſtrives the bride,
But by the hero ſtands deny'd:
She weeps before him, and in tears
Throughout the day the dame appears:
Her growing grief he cannot bear,
But gives the ſecret to the fair.
When, ere the ſeventh deſcending ſun
Had his diurnal journey run,
The thirty youths before him ſtand,
Explain his riddle, and demand
The forfeit raiment. Soon he roſe,
And in reſentment haſty goes:
Their fraudful dealing he could aim,
And whence the gainful ſecret came.

To diſtant Aſhkelon * that night
He took his way, ſtrong in his might;
There thirty men in rage he ſlew,
And with their raiment ſoon withdrew.
He paid his forfeit out of hand,
And in reſentment left the land:
When his young bride her ſire aſſign'd
To his companion left behind.

The hero's love at length returns,
To ſee his wife his boſom burns:
He goes, but bluntly is deny'd,
For now another claims his bride.
To juſt revenge in wrath he roſe,
For all the nation were his foes.
'Twas harveſt time, and every plain
Was cover'd with the yellow grain,
When, aided by the Power Divine,
In a ſhort time his ſnares confine

Three

* From Timnah to Aſhkelon is computed to be twenty-four miles.

Three hundred foxes. Theſe he ty'd
In pairs, and to each pair ſupply'd
A flaming torch between their tails;
And while the growing fire prevails
He turn'd them looſe amongſt the corn:
The floating flames, by breezes born,
From field to field directly flies,
And the whole land in ruin lies.
In grief the Philiſtines appear,
To ſee the labours of the year
At once deſtroy'd. The cauſe they learn,
Then in revenge to Timnah turn,
And Samſon's wife and father burn.
To vengeance as he will proceed,
The hero makes great numbers bleed;
Rages around, and heaps the plain
With growing mountains of the ſlain;
Then journeys to his native plains,
And Etam's rocky height he gains.

The Philiſtines invade the land,
And the bold hero's life demand;
Nor dare the tribes the claim oppoſe;
But up the rock an army goes:
The chief within a cave they find,
And with his own conſent faſt bind
With two ſtrong ropes: Then down they go,
And the young hero to the foe
Deliver up. Then all around
With ſhouts the armies ſhake the ground:
The man is ours, they loudly call,
By whoſe ſtrong arm whole ſquadrons fall.
While thus the hoſt their joy expreſt,
A mighty ſpirit heav'd the breaſt
Of the bound hero. At a ſtroke,
Like a burnt rag, the cords he broke
Which bound his arms; and ſoon he ſpies
An aſs's freſh jaw-bone, that lies
Ready at hand. The bone he takes,
And a prodigious ſlaughter makes

With

With this ſtrange weapon; and the ſlain
Lie heaps on heaps o'er all the plain:
The mighty man with fury drives,
Till a full thouſand loſe their lives.
The lion thus, with hunger bold,
Depopulates the nightly fold.
Then, while the ſlain around him lie,
The hero lifts the jaw on high;
And now in praiſe to GOD proceeds,
Who nerv'd his arm for dreadful deeds:
Then while he view'd the dead around,
He caſt the weapon to the ground.
Cover'd with ſweat, and blood, and duſt,
Spent out with toil, and parch'd with thirſt,
Now Samſon faints. Then burſt the jaw,
And water bubbles from the flaw:
The hero drinks, and is refreſh'd,
And mighty deeds inſpire his breaſt.
No toil or danger can control
The ardor of his mighty ſoul:

He

He undiſmay'd to Gaza goes,
The ſtrongeſt city of his foes,
And far remote from Iſrael's land
The walls and towers in order ſtand.
There at an inn a wanton fair
Takes every method to inſnare
His amorous heart; and with ſucceſs
Allur'd the hero to tranſgreſs.
The townſmen dare not round him riſe,
(A troop if they oppoſe him dies)
But cloſe conceal'd at diſtance lie,
And ſilent wait his coming by,
Hoping to give a private wound,
And ſafely bring him to the ground.
Thus, where the lion takes his way,
The timorous hounds at diſtance bay.
Still are the ſtreets, the gates are barr'd,
Not the leaſt noiſe or whiſper heard;
When morning ſhines it is decreed
The nation's greateſt dread ſhall bleed.

Now

Now night had gain'd her zenith throne,
When Samſon roſe, and went alone
Thro' the dark ſtreets, with heart elate,
And thunder'd at the city gate.
The gates faſt lock'd and barr'd he found,
Then with full force from the hard ground
He tears the two ſtrong poſts: The bars,
The gates, and two huge poſts, he rears
On his broad ſhoulders, and the load
Takes to a lofty hill that ſtood
By Hebron*. On the mountain's crown
The hero ſets his burden down.

In Sorek's vale, a wanton fair
Fill'd Samſon's mighty heart with care:
To her his amorous vows he paid,
And there his frequent viſits made.
The Philiſtines five rulers came
Soon to this looſe alluring dame,

* From Gaza to Hebron is computed to be 20 miles.

And her with promis'd bribes * engage
To free their land from Samſon's rage.
Her with ſuch promiſes they move
To take him in the toils of love,
The ſecret of his ſtrength to ſound,
And find by what he might be bound;
And when, by her to them betray'd,
He was an eaſy captive made,
The enormous ſum was to be paid.
The dame, encourag'd by the prize,
All her endearing ſoftneſs tries
To gain the ſecret, and to find
What with ſucceſs would Samſon bind.
The hero, to amuſe the fair,
In wanton mood, ſhe hears declare,

If

* The eleven hundred pieces of ſilver, which each of the five lords of the Philiſtines propoſed to give on this occaſion, when all put togethes amounted to 700l. of our money; which was a vaſt ſum in thoſe ages of the world.

If ſeven green oziers bind his hands,
Confin'd beyond his ſtrength he ſtands.
Eager to gain the offer'd prize,
The dame in haſte the ſecret tries.
The Philiſtines the oziers found,
And ſhe the ſleeping hero bound:
A band of ſoldiers they ſupply'd,
Which in a near apartment hide;
For if his hands he can get clear,
They dare not, for their lives, appear.
Then with loud ſhrieks ſhe ſhook the room;
The Philiſtines, ſhe cry'd, are come!
Rous'd by the noiſe, ſoon Samſon woke,
And at one jerk the oziers broke.
The harlot hugs him to her breaſt,
And repreſents the whole a jeſt:
The Philiſtines, with trembling awe,
As huſh as death, unſeen withdraw.
Tho' diſappointed in her views,
The baſe deſign the dame purſues:

Reſolving ſtill to try her power,
She ſlily ſeiz'd the amorous hour;
With winning ſoftneſs in her eyes,
Fond'ling and fawning thus ſhe cries:
What ſecret rapture ſwells my mind,
To think that I have charms to bind
A man of ſuch vaſt ſtrength; but ſay,
Canſt thou be bound no other way?
And will no chains ſucceſsful prove
To hold thee faſt, but thoſe of love?
Let me depend on thy reply;
What! can my gentle Samſon lie!—
To her requeſt the chief reply'd,
If with new ropes I ſhould be ty'd
Which ne'er before were us'd: I then
Should be as weak as other men.—
The fair procures new ropes in haſte,
With theſe ſhe binds her lover faſt:
The Philiſtines in ſecret hide;
A loud alarm at once ſhe cry'd:

The

The hero riſes from his bed,
And breaks the cordage like a thread.
As yet the ſoft inchanting dame
Is diſappointed in her aim;
But with intreaties ſtill ſhe tries
To fathom where the ſecret lies.
Indeed, ſhe cries, it is unkind,
Now I ſo much have ſet my mind
On one ſmall ſecret, to deſpiſe
And treat me with repeated lies:
Let me no longer thus complain;
Can I of Samſon aſk in vain!—
The chief reply'd, If in thy loom,*
Which now ſtands ready in the room,
Thou with thy web ſhalt weave my hair,
It ſurely will my ſtrength impair.—

The

* The labours of the loom was an amuſement in which ladies of the firſt quality employ'd their leiſure hours in theſe early ages of the world; of which we have a great number of inſtances in the writings of the ancients.

The hero's hair the harlot weav'd,
But found herſelf once more deceiv'd;
For when ſhe feign'd in fright to call,
He went away with loom and all.

Tho' thrice repuls'd, the wily fair
Still ſeeks her lover to inſnare:
Can love inſpire thine heart, ſhe cry'd,
And I ſo often be deny'd
One ſmall requeſt! Can love refuſe
The only thing my heart purſues!
Thrice hath thy falſe deluſive tongue
Deceiv'd and mock'd, and told me wrong;
What, muſt I always be refus'd!
And like a child or fool amus'd:
No longer will I bear it. I
Determine to ſucceed, or die.—
Thus cloſely preſs'd day after day,
Vex'd, teaz'd and wearied, he gave way;
And to the fair the ſecret gave.
Content to be a woman's ſlave.

O Samſon!

O Samſon! 'twas an evil hour
That put thy life into the power
Of a falſe harlot. When inſnar'd
By beauty's charms, thy lips declar'd
That if a razor ſhav'd thy head
Thy wonderous ſtrength would all be fled!
Now to the dame 'twas clearly known
That the great ſecret was her own:
To the Philiſtine lords ſhe ſends,
And all the train at once attends,
Ready to anſwer her demands,
And bring the money in their hands.
Huge brazen fetters are aſſign'd
The mighty man ſecure to bind:
And a ſtrong band of ſoldiers wait
To bear the hero to his fate.
Lull'd by the fair's bewitching charms,
The lover ſlumbers in her arms;
And, while in ſleep's ſoft chains he's laid,
A razor mows his manly head.

Then,

Then, with an hideous ſhriek ſhe cries,
The Philiſtines upon thee riſe!
Sampſon, awake!—The chief aroſe,
And now too late his folly knows:
Shorn of his ſtrength, he ſtands no more
The matchleſs man he was before.
The Philiſtines the difference find,
His mighty limbs with fetters bind;
And, ſoon as in their power it lies,
Tear out the orbs of both his eyes.
To diſtant Gaza then he's brought,
And there by hardſhip wiſdom taught;
In a deep dungeon now confin'd,
And doom'd by hand their corn to grind,
Hard labour bows his mighty mind:
With miſery worn, and toil, alas!
The ſhadow now of what he was.
Soon thro' the land the tidings ran
Of what befel the wonderous man;

That

That Samſon, blinded and in chains,
Gaza's cloſe priſon now contains;
And feſtive mirth, and ſhouts of joy,
Thro' the five realms directly fly.
Then, as the ſovereign lords decreed,
Throughout the land the heralds ſpeed,
And a great ſacrifice proclaim,
Sacred to Dagon's mighty name,
Whoſe power, they ſay, has now laid low
Our great deſtroyer, and our foe.
In crowds the nobles of the land,
Exulting in the great command,
To the glad city ſoon repair,
And join in the rejoicing there.
Then ſoon to fiſh-tail'd Dagon's fane
Proceeds in pomp the ſolemn train:
To ſacrifice they ſoon proceed,
With garlands crown'd the victims bleed;
One part they burn, and on the reſt
Within the ſtately temple feaſt:

In noiſy mirth, and drunken ſong,
The day loud roaring rolls along.
Such crowds on this occaſion came,
No building could contain the ſame.
The temple's roof they climb, and there
Three thouſand worſhippers appear:
When ſoon, to aid their noiſy mirth,
The officers bring Samſon forth.
A mighty ſhout the temple ſhakes
When he his firſt appearance makes:
His hair was grown again, but they
Behold him now without diſmay;
And while he's blindly led about,
With jeers and ſcoffs the chief they flout.
Stung to the heart, he aſk'd the boy
That held his hand, to ſet him nigh
The two vaſt central columns, where
The huge flat roof was known to bear:
And as he felt the poliſh'd ſtone,
He thus addreſs'd JEHOVAH's throne:

Great

Great God of Iſrael! thou whoſe might
Hath often nerv'd my arm for fight,
When by thine aid, with thundering hand,
I ſtood the bulwark of our land,
Once more with me to vengeance riſe,
And all this roaring rabble dies,
To pay the forfeit of my eyes.—
A pillar in each arm he takes,
And with vaſt force the building ſhakes;
With all his might bow'd down his face,
And puſh'd the columns from their baſe;
Loud craſh the beams, the rafters fall,
When inſtant looſning from the wall
Down comes the roof, with dreadful noiſe;
A mighty nation buried lies:
Thouſands above, and more below,
To death's dark ſhade together go;
Whoſe bodies lie promiſcuous cruſh'd,
'Midſt timber, ſtones, and heaps of duſt.

LORD, let me die, the hero ſaid,
And falls amongſt the heap of dead:
But in his fall triumphant roſe
O'er thouſands of his country's foes,
Which at one ſtroke his arms ſubdue,
And more than in his life he ſlew.
Thus Samſon to his end was brought:
Iſrael he judg'd, and for them fought
Full twenty years. And now attends
His mournful father, with his friends:
His corps they from the ruins gain'd,
And buried in his native land.

HISTORY THE EIGHTH.

The Idolatry of Micah; and the Deſtruction of Laiſh.

Judges, ch. xvii. xviii.

IN thoſe dark days * when Iſrael ſtood
Reluctant to their higheſt good;
In the wild maze of error trod,
And left the worſhip of their GOD;
While, void of rule, they each fulfil
The dictates of his vagrant will;
A Levite youth, at Bethlehem bred,
By poverty or choice was led
To journey 'croſs mount Ephraim's ſide,
In hopes to find his wants ſupply'd:

For

* It is allowed on all hands, that this hiſtory, and the following, which gives an account of the Levite and his wife, in the order of time ſhould have been introduced in an earlier period; and 'tis ſuppoſed that the time when theſe tranſactions happened was after the death of the elders that outlived Joſhua, and before the time that Othniel judg'd Iſrael.

For Levi now might ſeek his bread,
When from God's altar all were fled.
There as his journey he purſues,
A noble houſe the young man views;
At this he ſtopp'd a while, to try
Either for victuals or employ.
Micah, the maſter of the dome,
Was glad to ſee a Levite come;
For he had lately turn'd his mind
To idol-worſhip, and aſſign'd
The impious prieſthood to his ſon:
But now his thoughts on Levi run,
And he to gain his favourite view
Gives food, and cloaths, and wages too.
Two ſilver images were made;
Micah to them his worſhip paid;
And in the rites to lead the way,
The Levite was content to ſtay.

The haughty Amorite conſtrains
The tribe of Dan to leave the plains

And

And pleaſant vales to them aſſign'd;
And to the mountain heights confin'd
The ſtraiten'd families, who now
Would fain contrive ſome method how
To enlarge their border. They command
Five men of war to ſearch the land;
Who marching with this favourite aim,
Soon to the houſe of Micah came.
They know the Levite; and enquire
His occupation, and his hire.
He tells them all. They aſk to know,
If GOD will bleſs the way they go?
He ſoon enquires, and brings them word,
Their way is pleaſing to the LORD.
To diſtant Laiſh they proceed,
Where flocks and herds ſecurely feed;
And rural peace and plenty reigns
Amongſt the townſmen and the ſwains:
Secure they dwelt at diſtance, far
From all the noiſe and rage of war.

To their own land return the ſpies,
And tell their friends where Laiſh lies;
What plenteous crops the country crown,
And how defenceleſs is the town.
Soon in bright arms their troops appear,
And carry war and terror there:
They take the city by ſurprize,
And low in death each native lies;
Then take what plunder they deſire,
And inſtant ſet the town on fire.
In their poſſeſſion they retain
Each pleaſant vale and flowery plain;
Then built a city, and remain'd
In the rich land their ſwords had gain'd.
As Micah's impious idols lay
Directly in the warriors way
That on this expedition came,
The men had call'd, and ſeiz'd the ſame.
The Levite likewiſe had them join'd;
To him the prieſthood they aſſign'd;

And

And while the ark at Shiloh ſtay'd,
Worſhipp'd the gods that Micah made.

HISTORY THE NINTH.

The War with Benjamin; and the Deſtruction of Gibeah.

Judges, ch. xix. xx. xxi.

NOW Iſrael's tribes are ſeen from far,
In all the pride and pomp of war:
On Gibeah's plains their armies ſhine,
And all the kindred tribes combine
On Benjamin the ſword to turn,
Till he his guilt and folly learn:
From Gibeah's bold outrageous ſins
This well-directed war begins:
The breach of hoſpitable laws,
And rape and murder are the cauſe.

In righteous wrath the tribes decreed
The impious Gibeonites to bleed.
To Benjamin complaint they made
That needful juſtice was delay'd;
And the vile miſcreants demand,
That of them they might rid the land.
The Benjamites reject the claim,
Nor will the guilty townſmen blame;
But in the hoſtile field appear,
Bent to decide the quarrel there.
Their armies ſhine on Gibeah's ground,
Men of vaſt ſtrength, and far renown'd:
With theſe a troop to war proceeds,
Known in the field by mighty deeds,
Left-handed men, all ſkill'd to throw
Vaſt ſtones from diſtance on the foe.
From Gibeah's gates, with martial rage,
Elate, and eager to engage,
They ruſh to fight, and ſpread the plain
With growing mountains of the ſlain.

From morn to night the battle bleeds,
And Gibeah dares immortal deeds;
Spreads terror on the plains around,
And beats the armies to the ground;
Till friendly night gives Iſrael breath,
And ſtops the dreadful work of death:
When twenty thouſand warriors ſlain
Cover in heaps the groaning plain.

At Shiloh then the tribes appear,
And aſk JEHOVAH's counſel there,
Who bids them in the war proceed,
And recompence the horrid deed.
When the fair morn adorns the ſkies,
The hardy tribes in arms ariſe,
To where they fought the former day,
And put the battle in array.
But Benjamin ſtill ſcorns to yield;
Furious he ruſhes to the field,
The battle burns, the mighty bleed,
Once more the victory is decreed

To his ſtout warriors; and again
He ſees near twenty thouſand ſlain.
The humbled tribes from war retreat,
Then to the LORD their prayers repeat,
And weep before his mercy-ſeat:
In ſolemn ſacrifice they join,
And offerings on his altar ſhine.
They counſel aſk; and GOD replies,
Once more in arms let Iſrael riſe;
Now go and proſper.—They obey,
And ſoon as morn reſtores the day
Shine in bright arms; but wary go,
And to ſurprize the eager foe
An ambuſh lay behind the wall:
Then Gibeah's ſons with fury fall
On Iſrael's tribes, and they retreat.
The foe, unconſcious of the cheat,
Purſue with ſpeed, and leave the town,
Thinking to beat the armies down:

Then

Then ſoon the men in ambuſh riſe,
And who remains in Gibeah dies;
The town with ſpeed they wrap in fire,
And clouds of ſmoke to heaven aſpire.
The Benjamites, with wild amaze,
Behold from far the riſing blaze;
Diſmay and horror ſeize them all,
And by the raging ſword they fall.
Then with loud ſhouts, reſounding far,
The ambuſh ruſhes to the war,
And ſoon hemm'd in on every ſide,
The impious men of Gibeah dy'd.
Vaſt ſlaughter rages o'er the plains,
Six hundred only now remains
Of thirty thouſand men of might,
At Gibeah number'd for the fight:
Theſe in the lonely deſert hide,
And a huge rock retreat ſupply'd
Deep in its caves.—With pious care
To Shiloh ſoon the tribes repair;

The nation in great grief appears,
And copious fall the tender tears:
Their victory they now deplore,
One tribe of Iſrael is no more!
With one conſent they then deviſe
Some means by which this tribe may riſe.
Rimmon's high rock a party gains,
And back they bring the poor remains
Of the loſt tribe. The hoſt contrives
A method to procure them wives;
But each had ſworn before the war
He would to them no daughter ſpare.
They then a ſtrict enquiry made
What Iſraelites from war had ſtay'd;
And it appear'd that 'croſs the ſtream
The men of Jabeſh had not came.
Twelve thouſand troops without delay
The men of Jabeſh-Gilead ſlay:
But from the fury of the war
Four hundred beauteous virgins ſpare.

Theſe to the Benjamites they give.
Lament their loſs, and bid them live;
But yet their number not allows
Each of the men to have a ſpouſe;
Two hundred ſtill are not ſupply'd,
For which their brethren thus provide:
Near Shiloh's ſacred ſtream, they ſay,
In ſolemn pomp is held to-day
An annual feaſt; the virgins there
In ſoft aſſemblage will appear,
While nimble dance, and ſacred ſong,
And mirth and joy the day prolong;
Then hide you in the neighbouring ſhade,
And when the ſhining train's diſplay'd
Ruſh from your place, and boldly ſeize
The maid that beſt is formed to pleaſe:
And if their friends for vengeance cry,
Then will we ſtrive to pacify.—
The warriors heard, nor long delay'd,
But each bears off a lovely maid;

Then ſoon their native land regain,
Repair their towns, and there remain.

HISTORY THE TENTH.

Of Boaz and Ruth.

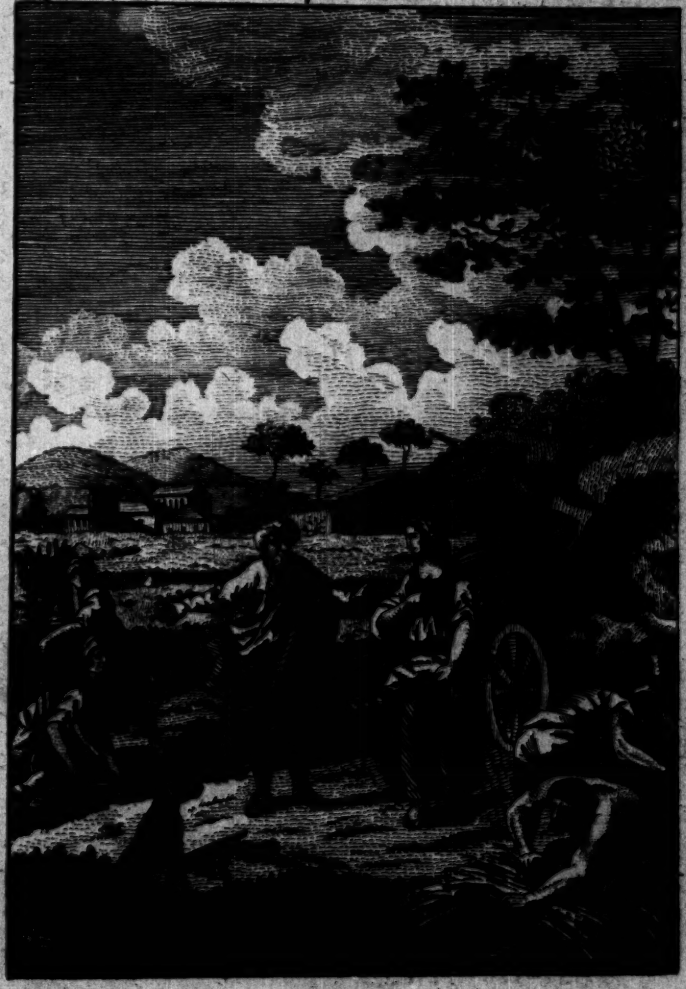
Ruth, ch. i. ii. iii. iv.

BEFORE victorious Gideon roſe
To cruſh his nation's daring foes,
While Midian's armies ſpread around
Deſtroy'd the product of the ground,
A chief, Elimelech by name,
From Bethlehem to Moab came:
His wife and ſons * the journey ſhare,
By famine urg'd to ſhelter there.
Soon in this land the father dy'd:
The widow took each ſon a bride

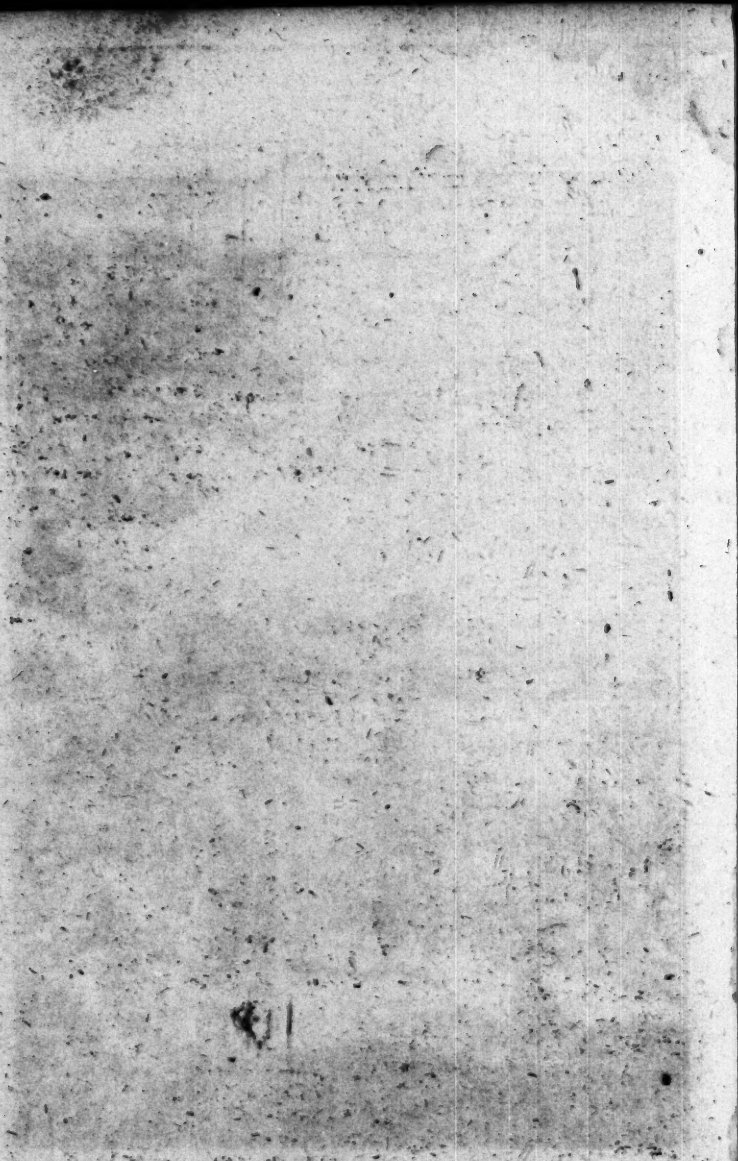
Of

* Elimelech had two ſons, whoſe names were Mahlon and Chilion.

Engrav'd for Fellows's Hist. of the Bible.



The kindneſs of Boaz to Ruth.



Of Moab's daughters. Soon expire
The ſons, and join in death their ſire.
A while the hapleſs matron mourn'd,
And then to Judah's plains return'd.
The two young widows, loth to part
From their fond mother, with ſad heart
Join in the journey. While they mourn
The matron begs them to return.
Orpha, the eldeſt, ſoon obeys;
But Ruth with her dear mother ſtays:
To thee, ſhe cries, I will incline,
Thy people, and thy God are mine.—
Now Judah's hills and vallies yield
The ripened product of the field;
The heavy harveſts nodding ſtand,
And aſk the chearful reapers hand;
When Naomi to Bethlehem came,
Such was the aged matron's name.
Amongſt the reapers Ruth appears,
Gleaning the looſe and ſcatter'd ears.

Boaz, a chief of wealth and fame,
Lord of the land, beholds the dame:
To her with tenderneſs he goes,
And more than common kindneſs ſhews.
While harveſt laſts, the fair remains
Gleaning each day amongſt the ſwains:
And when the harveſt moon beheld
The laſt full ſheaves forſake the field;
When joy ſits on the threſhing-floor,
And ſhouts proclaim the harveſt o'er;
Such rites as Iſrael's law allows
Make the fair Moabite his ſpouſe;
And from the offspring of the dame,
At length the great MESSIAH came.

HISTORY THE ELEVENTH.

The Birth of Samuel; and the Profligacy of Eli's Sons.

1 *Samuel*, ch. i. ii. iii.

TWO wives had rich Elkanah wed:
Peninnah fruitful to his bed
Soon after their eſpouſals prov'd;
But Hannah was the beſt belov'd.
To her had providence deny'd
The ardent wiſhes of a bride:
To her lov'd lord no child ſhe bears;
Sad was her ſoul, and full of cares.
At ſacred Shiloh every year
Elkanah and his houſe appear,
And offer ſheep and oxen there.
But Hannah, with vaſt care oppreſt,
Reluctant ſtands, nor ſhares the feaſt;
Peninnah's frequent ſcoffs and jeers
In[illegible]anguiſh of ſoul ſhe hears.

Then to the oracle ſhe ſtray'd,
And to the GOD of Iſrael pray'd;
And if her ſuit the LORD allows,
Her offſpring to himſelf ſhe vows.
Her heart is eas'd; ſhe dries her tears;
And in due time a ſon ſhe bears.
Her heart expands with growing joy,
And ſoon as ſhe had wean'd the boy,
Ever regardful of her word,
She ſet the child before the LORD.
A while ſhe at the altar ſtays,
With ſacrifice her vows ſhe pays;
In lofty ſtrains her praiſes run,
Then with the prieſt ſhe leaves her ſon.
Herſelf and huſband home return,
Nor longer had ſhe cauſe to mourn;
For from the pious fruitful dame
Three ſons and two fair daughters came.
Eli, the pious prieſt, appears
Preſs'd with a heavy weight of years;

While

While his two ſons the prieſthood ſhare,
But ill repay their father's care.
With hearts irreverent and lewd,
The youths their holy taſk purſu'd,
And by their vices made abhorr'd
The daily offerings of the LORD.
With ſoft reproof the tender ſire
Checks their prophane unhallow'd fire,
And blames their conduct: But in vain
He ſtrives their lewdneſs to reſtrain.

The LORD beholds with angry eyes,
But ere he bids his vengeance riſe,
He ſends a prophet in his name,
Who with theſe words to Eli came.
From his high throne thus ſpake the LORD,
Let all the prieſts attend his word:
Was it for this that I decreed
The prieſthood firſt to Levi's ſeed;
And to reward his willing mind,
Part of each ſacrifice aſſignd?

Shall

Shall I not viſit, when I ſee
Themſelves they honour more than me;
My worſhip with contempt regard,
And lewdly follow the reward;
Serve only in my houſe for gain,
And all my holy rites prophane?
Soon ſhall my wrath againſt them burn,
And from my holy altar ſpurn
The impious race. Vile in mine eye,
They all in early youth ſhall die;
No longer with my offerings fed,
But wandering wide for want of bread.

HISTORY the TWELFTH.

The Call of Samuel. The Defeat of Iſrael by the Philiſtines. The taking of the Ark. And the Death of Eli, and his Sons.

1 *Samuel*, ch. iii. iv.

NOW ſilent night aſſum'd her throne,
The lamp of GOD ſtill brightly ſhone,
Young Samuel near the altar lies,
And heavy ſlumbers ſeal his eyes.
GOD to the child had not appear'd,
Nor had as yet his voice been heard
By the young prophet. Now by name
Heaven's ſtill ſmall voice to Samuel came:
Wak'd by the ſound, the child aroſe,
And with ſwift ſtep to Eli goes.
I did not call, replies the ſire,
Let the dear youth to reſt retire.—

Thrice

Thrice by the child the voice was heard;
He thrice at Eli's feet appear'd:
At length the ſage, with aſpect mild,
Cries out, 'Tis GOD that calls, my child!
Go to thy place untouch'd by fear,
And when the voice again you hear,
Cry, Let the GOD of Iſrael ſay;
Thy ſervant hears, and will obey.—
The voice returns. So ſpake the child;
The GOD replies, with accent mild,
I will in Iſrael do a deed
At which the ſtouteſt heart ſhall bleed.
The wicked prieſts for vengeance call,
Which ſoon on Eli's houſe ſhall fall:
No offering ſhall my wrath appeaſe,
Till low in duſt alike it lays
The father and his impious ſons:
Thro' the whole race my fury runs:
So have I ſworn; and they ſhall ſee
My word ſhall ſtand, my will ſhall be.—

To

To make the great prediction good,
Soon Iſrael's plains are drench'd in blood.
Thro' bold Philiſtia's hardy ſons
Immortal rage and rancour runs:
They with vaſt armies ſpread the plain,
Which Iſrael's hoſts oppoſe in vain;
For ſoon they ſee four thouſand ſlain.
The reſt retreat in dire diſmay;
But hoping to retrieve the day,
Back to the field their armies trod,
And with them bring the ark of GOD:
Freſh courage thence the warriors gain,
And with loud ſhouts they ſhake the plain.
The Philiſtines with timorous fear
Behold the ſacred cheſt appear;
For Iſrael's GOD's immortal name
To every land and nation came.
This is the GOD that Egypt ſmote,
And Iſrael thro' the deſart brought;

With fear they cry'd. O let us then
Be ſtrong, and quit ourſelves like men.—
They then collecting all their might
With dreadful ſhouts begin the fight,
When falls the worſted Iſraelite.
Vaſt ſlaughter rages o'er the plain,
And thirty thouſand men are ſlain.
Eli's two ſons, that ephods wear,
The thirſty ſword diſdains to ſpare;
Beſide the ark they both lie dead:
The ark was ſeiz'd, and Iſrael fled.

The good old prieſt at Shiloh ſate
Anxious to hear his people's fate:
Now his dim eyes no longer ſhine,
His age approaches ninety-nine;
But liſtening to each ſtep that's trod,
He trembled for the ark of God.

Soon from the field a warrior came,
Whoſe looks and geſtures all proclaim

The

The depth and bitterneſs of woe,
And the whole town the tidings know.
Shiloh ſends up a general cry;
The ſage enquires the reaſon why.
To him with tears they bring the man,
Who thus the dreadful news began:
The hoſts of Iſrael all are fled;
Hophni and Phinehas both are dead;
Vaſt ſlaughter hath o'erſpread the plains,
And with the foe the ark remains.—
His grief and his ſurprize ſo great,
Then tumbled backward from his ſeat.
The good old ſire; and on the ground
His much-lamented death he found.

To Shiloh ſoon the conquerors came,
Where Iſrael's GOD records his name,
And with encreaſing rage and pride
The ſacred town their hoſt deſtroy'd.
The tabernacle Iſrael rear
At Nob: but now no ark was there.

HISTORY THE THIRTEENTH.

Dagon and the Ark.

1 *Samuel*, ch. v. vi.

AND now to impious Dagon's fane —
Proceeds with ſhouts the victor train.
His temple high in Aſhdod ſtands,
Where eager crowd the warrior bands:
Upwards like man: fiſh from the waiſt:
The idol ſtood with laurels grac'd;
By this the ark of GOD was plac'd.
While ſacred light adorns the ſkies,
The hoſt prolongs the ſacrifice;
At night retire: When morning roſe,
A train of prieſts to Dagon goes;
They to his ſeat lift up their eyes,
Before the ark the idol lies.
Affected with their god's diſgrace,
They raiſe and ſet him in his place:

But,

But, wondering, they next morning found
The mighty Dagon on the ground;
His nerveleſs arm and brainleſs head
About the temple floor were ſpread,
And only now their praiſe to gain
His fiſhy tail and trunk remain.
Then from the LORD a ſore diſeaſe
In duſt the friends of Dagon lays,
And ſwift the dire infection runs
Thro' great Azotus and her ſons;
Who all unite, and jointly pray
To ſend the ark of GOD away.
The ark to Gath was ſoon convey'd,
And there, before it long had ſtaid,
A peſtilence wide-waſting reigns
Throughout the city and the plains.
The dire diſeaſe they much lament.
And next the ark to Ekron ſent.
The Ekronites, with awful fear,
Strive to prevent its coming there:

Yet thro' the town deſtruction ſpread;
In heaps promiſcuous lie the dead;
Tortur'd with pain the living lie,
And great and general was the cry.
This the five princes view with grief;
And, to obtain them ſure relief,
The ark, with preſents, they command
To be reſtor'd to Iſrael's land:
To draw it there they ſoon aſſign'd
Two kine, which left their calves behind:
If it to Iſrael's land return,
They judge JEHOVAH made them mourn;
But if another way it go,
Some fatal chance hath caus'd their woe.
At fair Beth-ſhemeſh, while the ſwains
Reap'd the rich product of the plains,
They wondering ſee the ark arrive,
Lodg'd on a cart, and none to drive.

Drawn by two kine approach'd the waiu,
Their conſtant lowings ſhake the plain:
Theſe ſoon in ſacrifice are ſlain;
Dry wood to burn the cart ſupplies,
And ſhouts of joy from Iſrael riſe.

HISTORY THE FOURTEENTH.

The Philiſtines Army deſtroyed by Thunder and Lightning.

1 *Samuel*, ch. vii.

FULL twenty years the foe conſtrains
The routed tribes to wear their chains:
At Mizpeh then they all appear,
And weep before JEHOVAH there.
Samuel throughout the land was known,
And in prophetic glory ſhone:
Amongſt the tribes the ſeer appear'd,
And thus his awful voice was heard:

Ye men of Iſrael, hear my word!
If ye deſire to ſerve the LORD,
From idol-worſhip you muſt turn,
And all their impious ſtatues burn.
Baal and Aſhteroth forſake,
And I will ſupplication make.
If you regard the law he gave,
JEHOVAH ſtill is ſtrong to ſave.

Soon as the Philiſtines had heard
That the aſſembled tribes appear'd
At Mizpeh, their five lords combine,
When in the field their armies ſhine;
And while the holy prophet pray'd
Their warlike ſhouts the ear invade.
The nation to the prophet cries,
He bids them haſte to ſacrifice:
A ſucking lamb the tribes decreed
By Samuel's holy hand to bleed;
And while they fed the ſacred flame
The enemy upon them came.

But ſoon black clouds and ſtorms ariſe,
And ſwelling tempeſts fill the ſkies;
Deep thunders ſhake the vaſt profound,
And lightnings flant upon the ground;
Heavy and hard deſcends the ſtorm:
The forces can no longer form;
With terror the dread ſounds they hear,
The boldeſt warrior ſhakes with fear;
The flaſhing flames amaz'd they ſee,
And all in wild confuſion flee;
Wing'd thunder-bolts among them play,
And low in duſt the mightieſt lay.
The joyful tribes the tumult view,
Loud ſhout their armies, and purſue:
They with vaſt ſlaughter ſpread the land,
And their loſt cities now regain'd.
From Beer-ſheba to diſtant Dan
The praiſes of the prophet ran:
He led the tribes in righteous ways,
And judg'd the nation all his days.

The ſacred venerable man,
After a length of years began
To ſtoop to age. Amongſt his ſons,
In various ſhapes blind folly runs:
Truth they regard not; nor deſire
To emulate their noble ſire.
The tribes their joint petition bring,
And of the ſeer intreat a king,
To judge their land, before them go,
And break the battle of the foe.
In grief appears the aged ſire
At what the eager tribes require;
But ſince they make a king their choice,
The LORD commands to hear their voice;
But plainly firſt before them lay
The ſtate of arbitrary ſway;
And truly to them all relate
What ills attend on kingly ſtate.
The holy prophet this explain'd;
But ſtill all Iſrael fix'd remain'd,

And their united claim maintain,
Determin'd ſtill a king to gain.
The man of GOD regards each word,
And ſpreads the caſe before the LORD;
Who condeſcends to the requeſt:
The armies then the ſeer diſmiſt.

HISTORY THE FIFTEENTH.

Samuel anointeth Saul.

1 *Samuel*, ix. x.

AT Ramah dwelt the ſacred ſeer:
The townſmen all in joy appear;
Up a high hill with him they riſe,
Deſigning there to ſacrifice.
But ere the prophet and his train
The ſummit of the mountain gain,
A tall young man the ſeer o'ertakes,
And his requeſt reſpectful makes,
To learn, by the great prophet's aid,
How far his father's aſſes ſtray'd?
Then ſpake the LORD, Regard my voice!
Behold the man that is my choice!
I Iſrael's throne to him ordain,
And o'er my people he ſhall reign.—

The

The prophet to the youth replies,
Go up with me to ſacrifice;
And let the day with joy be crown'd;
The aſſes which you ſeek are found.
All day the youth prolongs his ſtay,
When morning ſhines he takes his way:
The ſacred ſeer, upon his head
Pouring the holy ointment, ſaid;
The God of Iſrael hath decreed
Thee captain of his choſen ſeed.—
Three tokens then the prophet gave,
That confidence the youth might have.
Each token ſoon appear'd in view;
And every article was true.

The End of the Second Volume.

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